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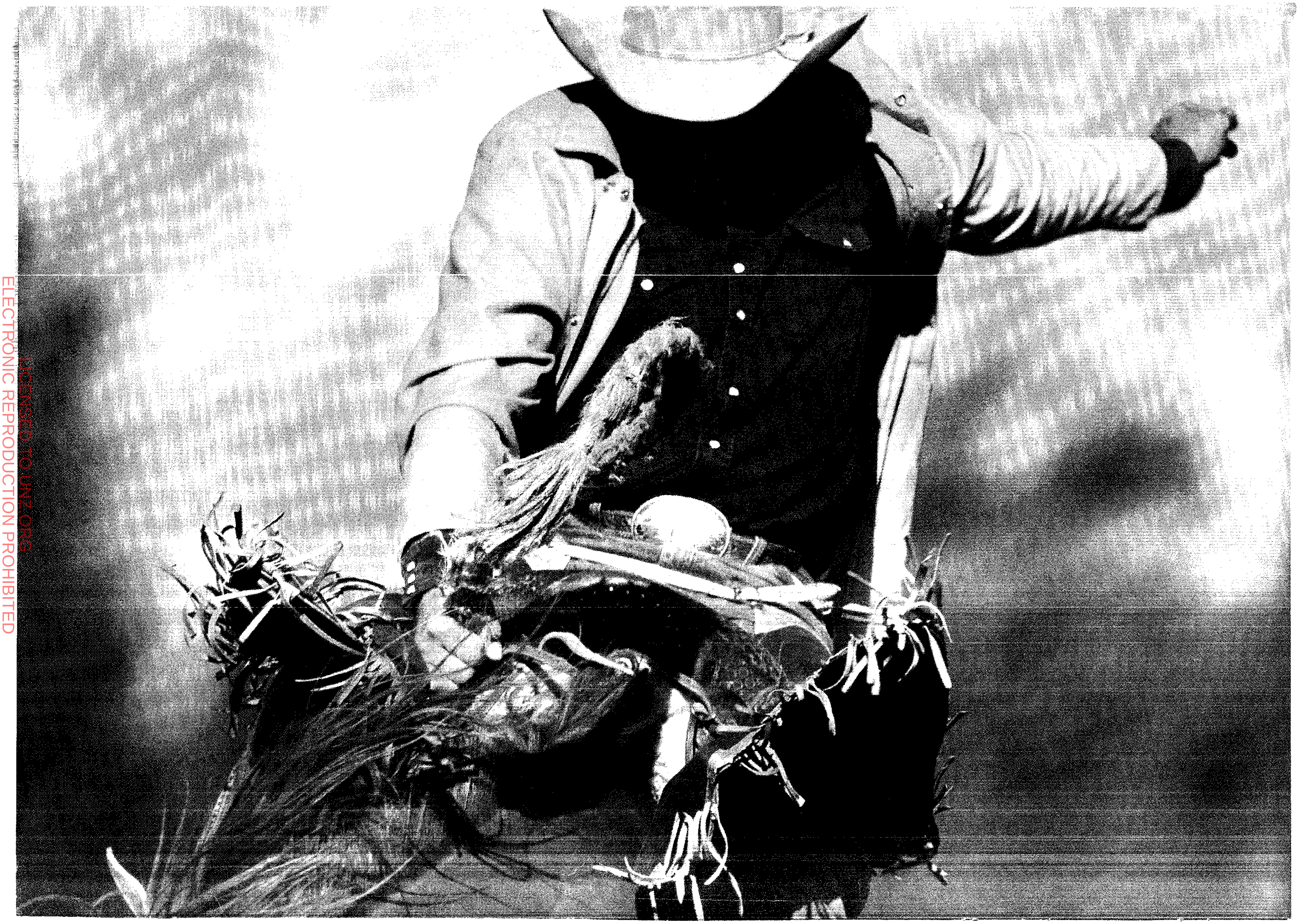

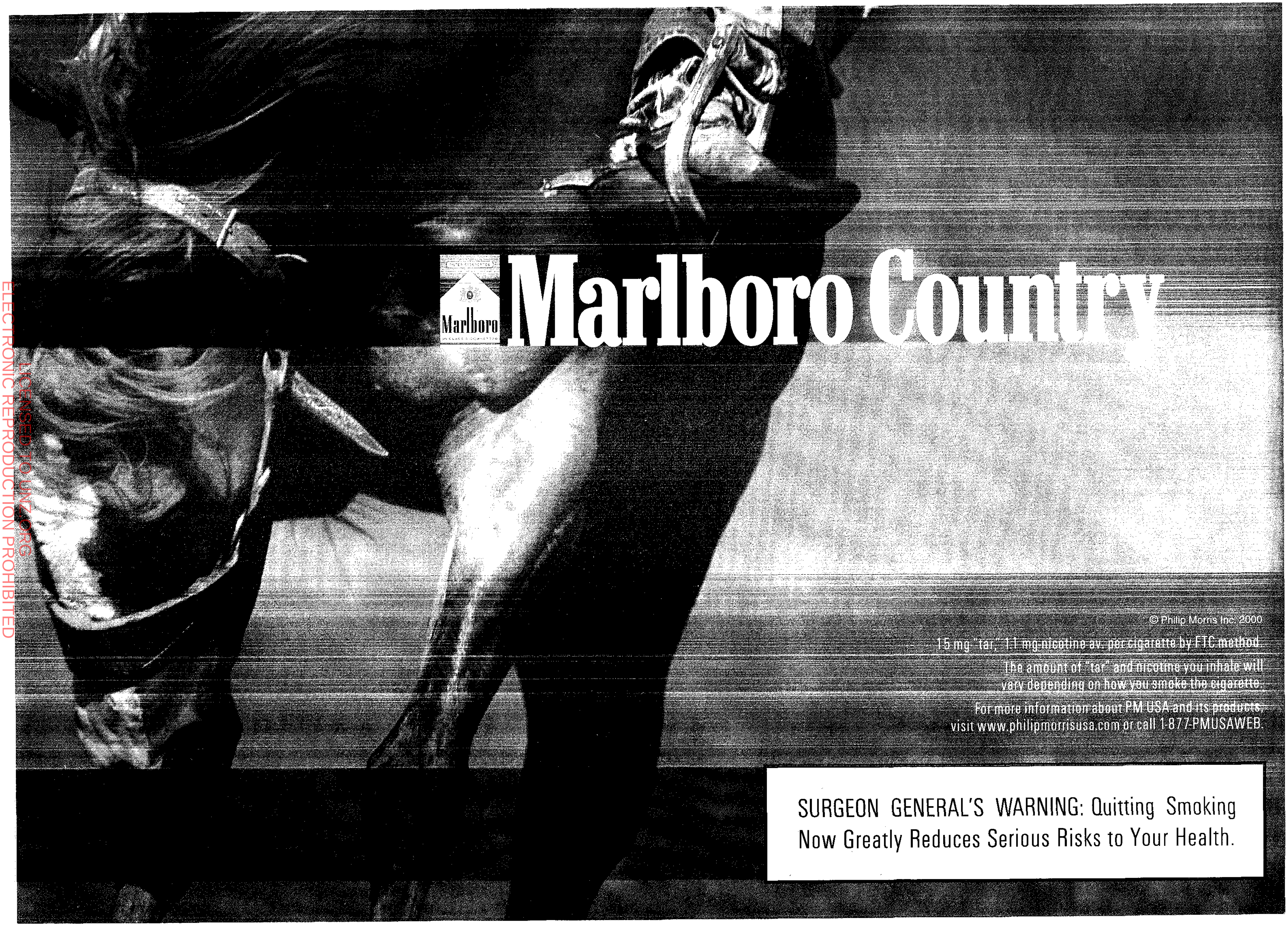

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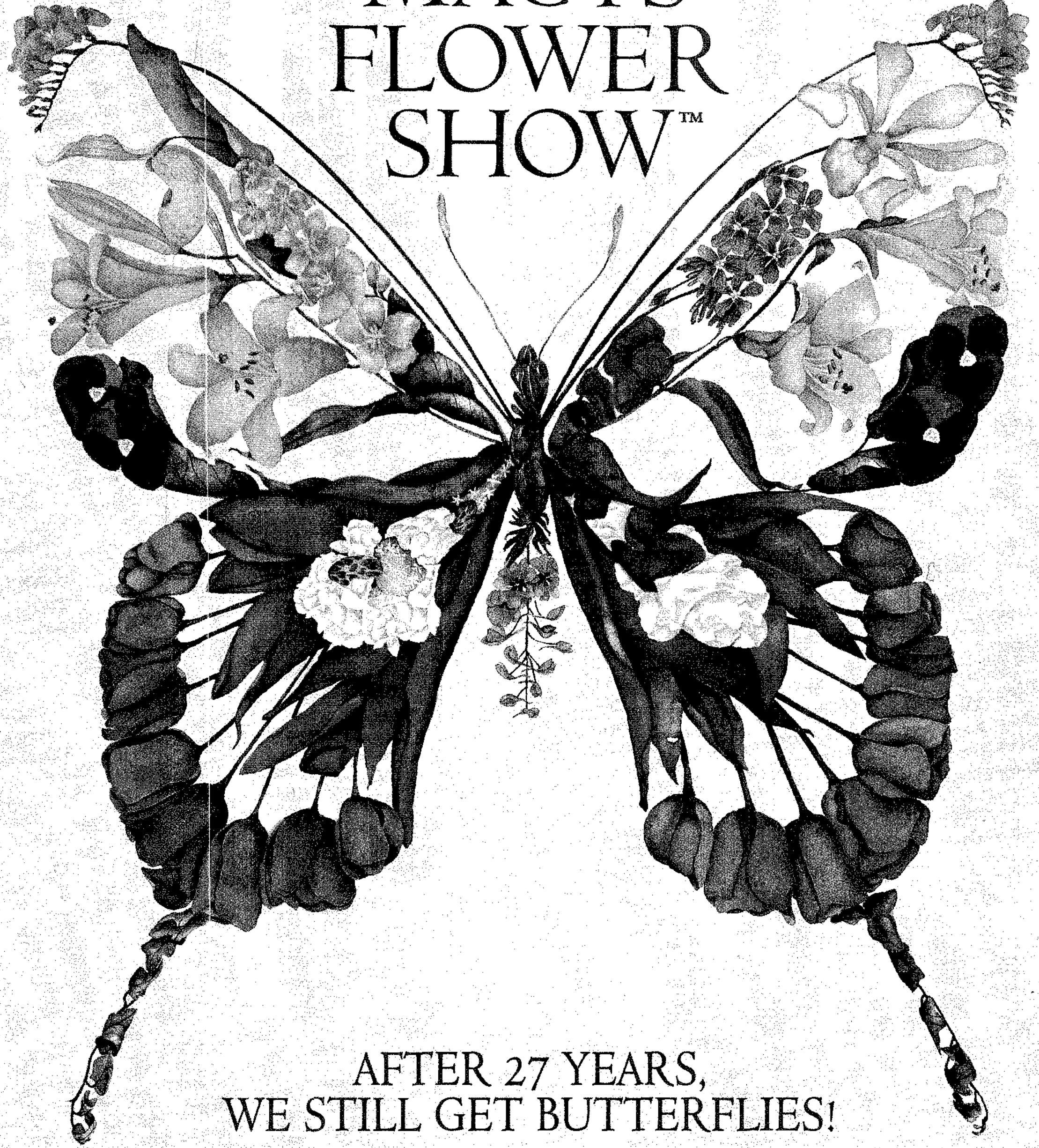

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Contents

April 16, 2001

6 **Letters**
9 **Intelligencer:** Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman
11 **Scene:** Patrick McMullan

Gotham

14 The mild-mannered Irishman behind Mel Brooks's The Producers
16 **Real Estate:** Carl Swanson
17 **Style:** Amy Larocca

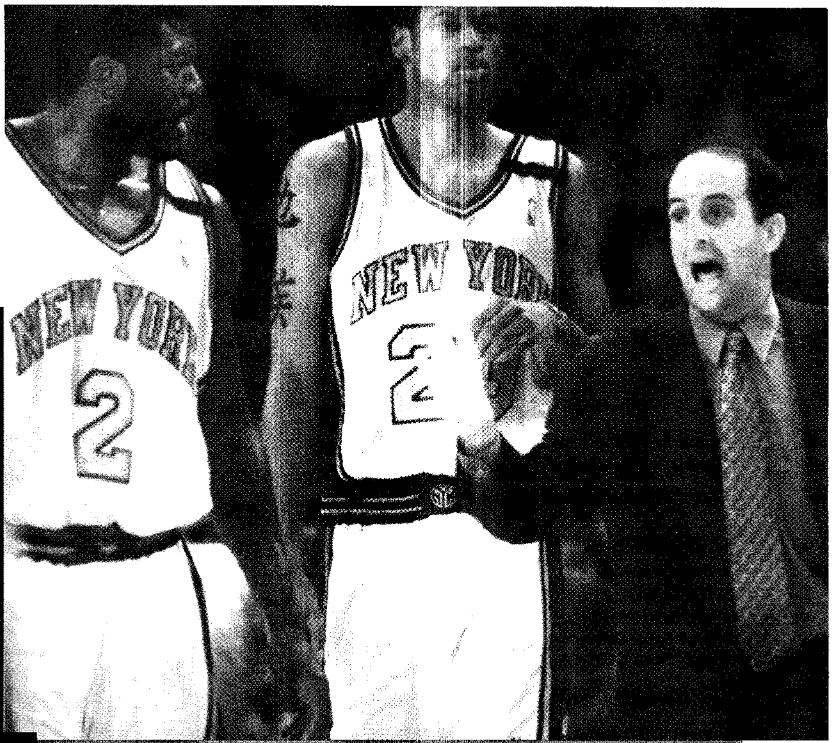
Columns

18 **This Media Life:** Michael Wolff
Is Andrew Cuomo the Real Thing?
22 **The National Interest:** Tucker Carlson
Even liberals no longer feel liberal guilt—and even conservatives should feel bad about that
50 **Best Bets** Rima Suqi
Pop Art totes, dessert plates by Calvin, and toothbrush holders for tots
52 **Sales & Bargains:** Sara Cardace
Upscale pedicures at clipped prices
54 **Tech:** Hillary Rosner and Simon Dumenco
High-tech workout alternatives
69 **Cue** **Best of the Week**

Critics

70 **Movies:** Peter Rainer
Blow won't get you high
71 **Books:** Daniel Mendelsohn
The Bible provides fodder for two new books: one insipid, one inspiring
72 **Theater:** John Simon
Even a lackluster production can't ruin Sondheim's *Follies*
73 **Architecture:** Joseph Giovannini
The Japan Society takes us inside the mind of Frank Lloyd Wright
74 **Television:** John Leonard
Holly Hunter wins the title as Billie Jean King
75 **Pop Music:** Rob Levine
Springsteen's latest live album: You still had to be there
76 **Restaurants:** Hal Rubenstein
Enjoying the atmosphere at the Park
78 **Listings**
110 **Classifieds/Personals**
124 **'Cue' Crossword:** Maura B. Jacobson
'Guardian' Crossword

Volume 34, Issue 15



> "I'm not a positive guy. My intensity is my greatest strength. It's also my greatest weakness."
> —Jeff Van Gundy, page 38

24 If I Were a Rich Mayor By Meryl Gordon

Michael Bloomberg's got a billion-dollar financial-news empire, private jets, a helicopter he flies himself, art-filled homes in London and Bermuda—and a burning ambition to be mayor. But can this famously thin-skinned media CEO thrive under the media's microscope? And is the city ready to vote for a man who's running as a Republican only because he knew he couldn't win as a Democrat? The first in-depth profile about the billionaire who would be mayor.

32 Buying Ivy By Ralph Gardner Jr.

Certain well-heeled Manhattan parents will stop at nothing to get their child into one of the country's top colleges. That's why 33-year-old independent college-guidance counselor Katherine Cohen ("Boys lust after her," says a colleague, "and girls want to be her") gets away with charging $28,995 per student. Some accuse her of "packaging" her charges. "What I call it," she says, "is making sure their authentic voices come through."

38 All Work, No Play By Chris Smith

Think Jeff Van Gundy's game-day repertoire of sulks, angry pouts, and intense tirades lightens up when he's away from the court? Think again. The Knicks coach takes losing hard. And winning hard. And living hard. Which is the secret of his success.

44 Fashion Fireworks By Mark Holgate

This year's European shows were full of drama, on the runways and off. With big-name designers jumping ship and replacements eager to prove their mettle at some of the most renowned fashion houses, anything, it seemed, could happen—and it did.

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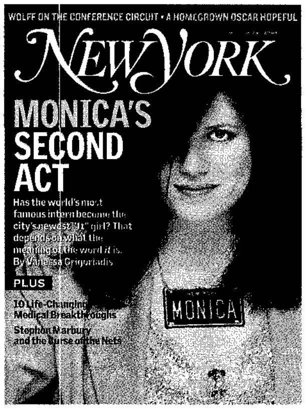
Letters

"According to my Rolex watch, Monica Lewinsky's fifteen minutes should have been up years ago."
—K. B. Doremus

Internal Affairs

Thanks for Vanessa Grigoriadis's very balanced portrait of Monica Lewinsky ["Monica Takes Manhattan," March 19]. I was startled when the news broke about her involvement with President Clinton. As I began to follow the unfolding story, however, I could not hate her. She made mistakes when she was very young and vulnerable. She isn't the first; she won't be the last. The amazing thing about this young woman is how she has survived and continued to view life in a positive way. Not too many of us could handle these experiences as well as she has. I wish her a lot of luck and, maybe, somewhere along the way, a young man who loves her for the person she is.

Meg Salvaggio, BRIDGEPORT, CONN.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MONICA'S SECOND ACT
Has the world's most famous intern become the city's newest "It" girl? That depends on what the meaning of the word *it* is. By Vanessa Grigoriadis
PLUS
10 Life-Changing Medical Breakthroughs
Stephon Marbury and the Curse of the Nets
MONICA

According to my Rolex watch, Monica Lewinsky's fifteen minutes should have been up years ago. Or is *New York* Magazine still on Clinton time? Placating such celebrity wannabes only encourages others to follow in their misguided footsteps.

K. B. Doremus, LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

What's that in my postbox? *The National Enquirer*? *The Sun*? Considering the vast number of talented people in New York City who have contributed to the betterment of society, I'm sorry you chose a tabloid queen for your cover. Reporting on her is one thing, but I expected better from *New York*.

Colette Sipperly, UPPER MONTCLAIR, N.J.

I just finished reading "Monica Takes Manhattan" and want to commend *New York* Magazine for having the bravery to print such a balanced portrait of a woman who has been so vilified. The writing was fantastic and the subject endlessly interesting.

Marylouise Dryfuss, MANHATTAN

I'm a mother of three girls and consider myself to have very modern but decent moral values. Am I the only person who is disgusted by the cover stories, articles, society columns, and boutiques that feature Monica, her life, and her "designer" handbags? No one can convince me that this girl would be anyone special had she not serviced the president of the United States. Is she someone to be rewarded—someone my girls should look to as a role model? What is this country coming to?

E. Kopel, QUEENS

Why is Monica Lewinsky on the cover of *New York*? Why is she on the cover of any magazine? She seems to be a nice enough gal and probably has learned quite a lot from her Year of Living Dangerously, but no matter how many fashion shows she attends, society events she's invited to, or cute handbags she sells, she will always be the girl who pleasured the prez. I don't understand the continued fascination with Monica—and yet wouldn't mind having dinner with her. Perhaps I've fallen under her spell and just haven't realized it.

J. D. Hyatt, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.

One of the things I always loved about New Yorkers is their ability to call celebrities out on their b.s. So what happened here? I would love to know what Monica has contributed to the betterment of our city to deserve a *New York* cover story (besides ugly, overpriced bags).

Dania Ahmad, MANHATTAN

We appreciate your mention of *The Villager* in Vanessa Grigoriadis's article "Monica Takes Manhattan." However, Grigoriadis's presumption that *Villager* columnist Wickham Boyle "had apparently followed us around all day" is inaccurate. As Boyle stated in her column "My First Monica Sighting, at MOMA," her being at the museum at the same time as Monica Lewinsky was total happenstance. For the record, *The Villager* does not assign its columnists to stalk celebrities or famous former White House interns.

John W. Sutter, MANHATTAN
PUBLISHER, *THE VILLAGER*

Comic Potential

Confusion and surprise best sums up my reaction to your "Intelligencer" item "It's a Revenge-Fueled World After All," in the March 26 issue [by Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman]. I was also at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival screening of *Shrek* clips and thought they were deliciously funny. I think the audience was stunned by the technology, not the pointed nature of some of the jokes. Sure, *Shrek* poked fun at Disney. The clips also took good-natured shots at other Hollywood films, like *The Matrix; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon;* and *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*. Come on, it's a comedy festival—get a sense of humor!

Karen Shapiro, MANHATTAN

Unprotected Ex

Michael Wolff seems confused why, regarding Bill Clinton, "one week, we love him; the next week, we loathe him" ["This Media Life: Survivor II," March 26]. Actually, it's pretty obvious. Clinton was tolerated the past eight years because he happened to be in office while America's economy was vigorous. Now, without the shield of the presidency, he's nothing but a lying, unemployed cretin.

Anthony Bialy, KENMORE, N.Y.

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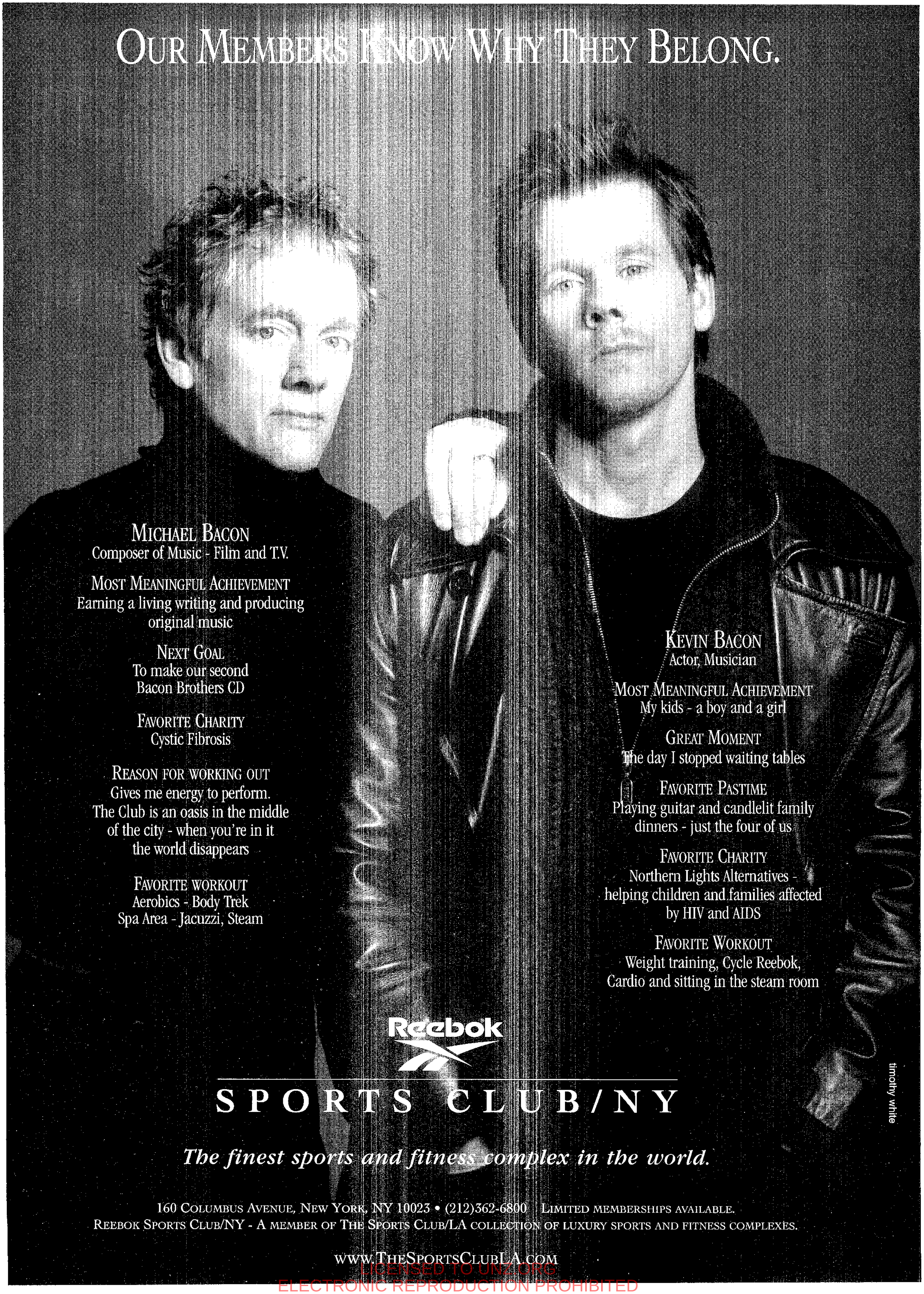

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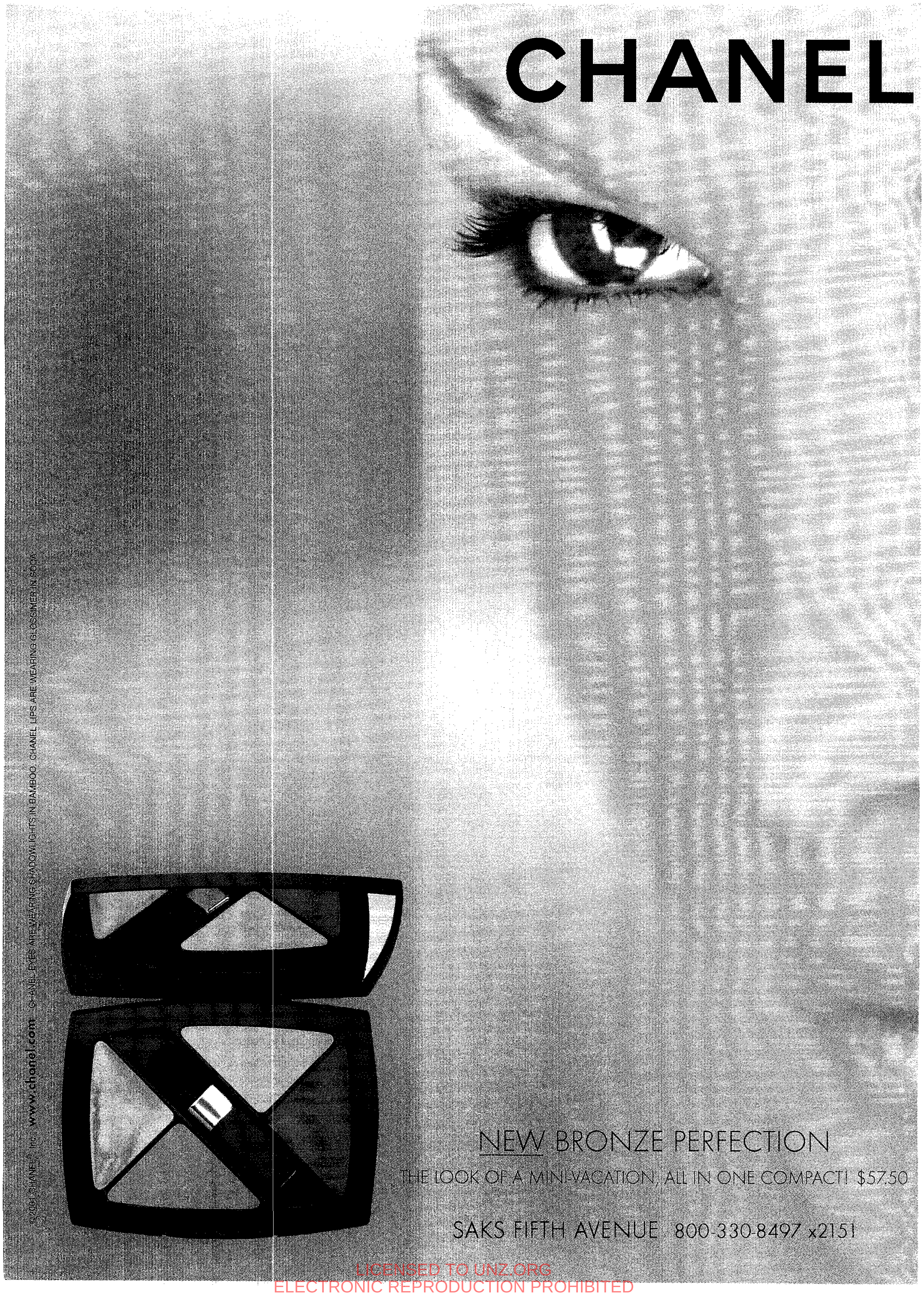
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Intelligencer

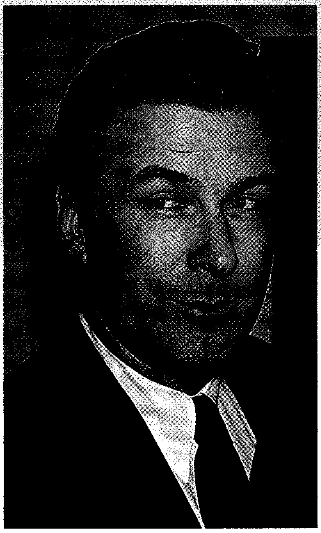
By Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman

She's Just Another Boldfaced Liar

Just when gossip maven **Jeane MacIntosh** thought she was out of the game, they pulled her back in. Little more than a year after leaving the New York *Post*'s "Page Six"—boldly stating that she would never write gossip again—MacIntosh has signed with Fairchild Publications to write a twice-weekly column on fashion-industry gossip for *Women's Wear Daily*'s Website, which launches in May. In a *Harper's Bazaar* feature about her five-year stint at the tabloid, MacIntosh proudly predicted, "I will never have to write the words '**Sean "Puffy" Combs**' again." Now, the scribe admits, "he has that clothing line, so I guess I'm screwed." Adding to the fun is the fact that before her "Page Six" run, MacIntosh worked as a *DNR* writer at Fairchild, where she had "many a set-to" with current editorial director **Patrick McCarthy**. "When I was in Patrick's office to sign the new *Women's Wear* contract," MacIntosh relates, "I told him that I seemed to remember something about not letting the door hit me on the ass on the way out the last time I was there. Patrick brayed." As for being back among the scandal fiends, MacIntosh says, "Obviously, the world cannot exist without gossip, and neither can I." Ah, finally a little truth.

Alec Baldwin's *Really* Wireless

Alec Baldwin has finally managed to attract an audience. The actor recently gave a performance on Lafayette Street worthy of a true Hollywood diva, reports a witness, in which he feverishly destroyed his cell phone before a crowd of horrified onlookers. For reasons unbeknownst to us, Baldwin commenced the hissy fit by throwing the offending device against a wall. Not satisfied, the source says, Baldwin proceeded to stomp it with his tasteful brown shoes, bellowing, "Fuck! Shit! Fuck!" Says the witness, "People were literally backing away from him. It was like, 'Okay, this man is clearly insane.' " Fortunately for those watching the crusading thespian's curbside antics, Baldwin's fury rained down only upon his phone. Having rendered the communicator harmless, Baldwin—whose rep did not return repeated calls—picked up the pieces and quietly walked away. "What was so weird," says the tipster, "was to see a celebrity acting like a maniac." As far as we're concerned, that *never* loses its charm.



Meg Ryan's Friend, Pal, and Best Buddy

Could broken hearts be bringing **Meg Ryan** and **Griffin Dunne** together? Since Dunne's recent breakup with buxom model **Sophie Dahl** and Ryan's single status now that **Dennis Quaid** and **Russell Crowe** have both jumped ship, we hear the two have been doing the dinner-and-a-movie routine. Conveniently, Ryan is in town shooting Miramax's *Kate & Leopold.* So, uh, is it time to alert the photographers and start having them followed? "We're just friends. Friends go to the movies together," said the actor-director and son of **Dominick** when we caught up with him at a preview of *Bridget Jones's Diary.* A rep for Ryan also says the two are "just longtime friends," although a source close to the pair tells us "they are *adorable* together." When you're ready to break any news, kids, you just let us know.

The Strange Scent of Anna Wintour

Next week, when **Anna Wintour** co-hosts the premiere of *Moulin Rouge,* the much-hyped movie musical starring **Nicole Kidman** and **Ewan McGregor**, she'd better Scotchguard her snakeskin. We hear members of animal-rights group PETA will descend on the pelt-promoter's party to distribute samples of a fragrance they've named for their favorite target. Called Anna Wintour VISCERA (an acronym for "Vixen, Impaled, Stomach, Carcass, Entrails, Rotting, Aroma"), the *odeur,* says a group spokesman, is a blend of "clandestinely collected samples of Anna's venom, her secret witch's brew," with a *faux*-maggot in every bottle. An attached sample-card spoof features a photo of a skinned mink and the tagline, "It Brings Out Your Animal In-Stinks." While Wintour's rep offered no comment, that doesn't mean she won't strike back. You may recall that in 1997, when PETA protested outside of a *Vogue* party at Balthazar, the notoriously chilly editrix delivered a snack from the kitchen to the group of puppy-huggers: a platter of rare roast beef.

As If *Footloose* Weren't Enough

Now that Disney has its furry friends dancing and singing on Broadway, the only logical theatrical evolution would be . . . a musical

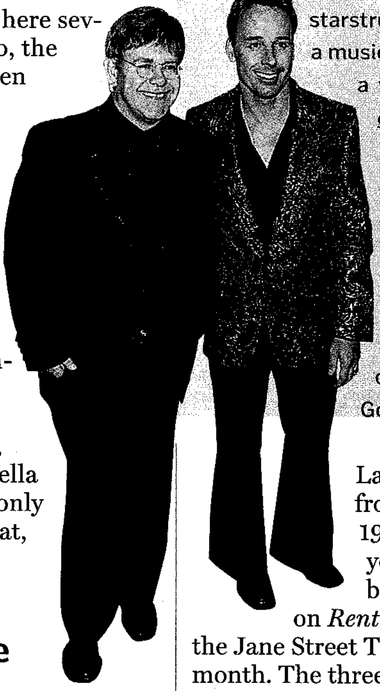
Photographs: top, Robin Platzer/Twin Images; bottom, Patrick McMullan.

from MTV? A source tells us the network is working on an agreement to co-produce a theater-district version of *bare*, a pop opera that debuted last year in L.A., directed by **Kristin Hanggi** and written by **Damon Intrabartolo** and **Jon Hartmere Jr.** A music-channel rep would not confirm the rumor but informed us that "there's no deal in place" before making sure we knew how to spell Hanggi's name. It sounds like kids who've by now outgrown *The Lion King* can look forward to *bare*'s open depiction of teen sexuality and its questioning of Catholicism. We, however, can't wait for the big tap number with **Kurt Loder**.

Food Fight!

Sometimes ink is thicker than blood. When *Times* food critic **William Grimes** recently reviewed the restaurant Marika, he heaped praise on the interior but was so critical of the fare as to suggest that the choice of chef, Joel Somerstein—who just happens to be the stepson of co-owner **Marika Somerstein**—was not the wisest business move. After being "stunned" by the review and that comment in particular, co-owner **Don Evans** says, "Joel and I have decided that it's best to move on." So the owners have snatched up **Neil Annis**, the assistant chef de cuisine from four-star Lespinasse. Undoubtedly, the food will improve—and we hope we can say the same for family relations. . . . In other restaurant news, those East End regulars mourning the loss of gay mecca Club Swamp and the Annex Restaurant can breathe easier. As first reported here several weeks ago, the club will reopen this season as SWA (as in "sway"), and now we've learned that the Annex Restaurant will be reincarnated as Star Room under the direction of chef **Kevin Penner**, formerly of Della Femina. Our only question: What, exactly, is gay food?

Still, He'll Always Be Sir Elton to Us



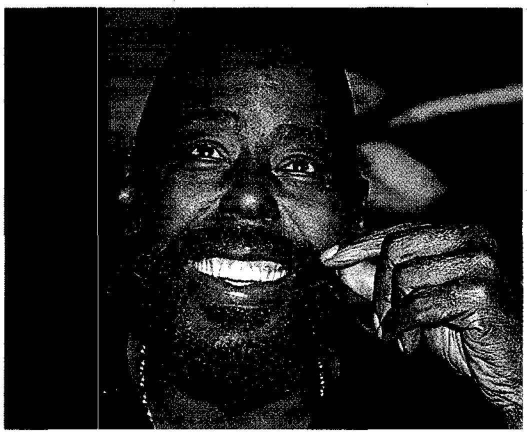
Could **Elton John** be more gay? The knighted pop star was recently on a shopping spree at Barneys with his boyfriend **David Furnish** and a phalanx of bodyguards when a starstruck shopper approached and gushed, "You are a musical god!" Before the flamboyant Brit could utter a word, Furnish corrected the fan with "That's *goddess*." According to an eyewitness, John and Furnish bought about $10,000 worth of Issey Miyake, Commes des Garçons, and Yohji Yamamoto, among other labels. While the queen of pop chose his clothing without trying anything on, Furnish was a bit more careful. Not bothering with those stuffy old dressing rooms, he doffed his pants for all to see in order to slip into some prospective items. Goodness, what would **Eminem** think?

Life Before *Rent*

With *Rent* celebrating its fifth anniversary, fans of Jonathan Larson's *La Boheme*-ian rock opera will soon get to see new work from the playwright-composer posthumously. *Tic, Tic . . . BOOM,* a musical Larson wrote from 1989 to 1991 (the year he began work on *Rent*), will hit the Jane Street Theater next month. The three-character show deals with an early-mid-life crisis Larson experienced upon turning 30, just before finding out that four of his best friends had contracted AIDS, which was the inspiration for *Rent*. **Victoria Leacock**, who is co-producing the show with *A Class Act* producer **Robyn Goodman**, had worked with Larson for ten years before he started writing the musical that exploded in the mid-nineties. "Since Jon died in 1996, not one person has contacted the estate about doing any of his earlier work," says Leacock. "I just looked at his dad and said, 'You know what? I'll do it.' " Previews begin May 23.

Additional reporting by Aric Chen and Seth A. Gladstone.

The Unpleasant Burn of Barry White



Soul singer **Barry White** will shill only so far. When the seventies crooner joined such musicians as **Liz Phair**, **De La Soul**, **George Clinton**, and **Iggy Pop** to shoot the now-famous iTunes commercial for Macintosh, the director asked him to deliver the tag line "It's your music. Burn it on a Mac." According to a witness, White pondered the request for a moment, then responded in his cool baritone, "No, I will not say that." Says the source, "We were all a little taken aback." Later in the shoot, the director was seen whispering to White—whose manager denies this story—after which the singer finally agreed to utter, "It's your music." The negotiated line, however, never made the cut. Also lost in the editing process was a bit in which Iggy Pop—who rarely ceased tongue-wrestling his young, statuesque girlfriend through the course of the day—and **Ziggy Marley** revisited **David Letterman**'s doomed "Oprah-Uma" gag. "It was really funny," insists the source. Sure.

Photographs: top, Milan Ryba/Globe Photos; bottom, Robin Platzer/Twin Images.

Pop Art

The artist **Damian Loeb** looked overwhelmed at **Mary Boone**'s Chelsea gallery on March 31 when **David Bowie** and **Iman** rushed over to congratulate him on his new show of (already sold-out) paintings titled "Public Domain." "You know," the lanky painter said with a sigh, "this really does wear you out." Then he excused himself to be doused with praise and blinded by flashbulbs. Loeb looked more relaxed later on at the meatpacking-district lounge APT, where art-world hipsters (**Francesco Clemente**) and hangers-on (those svelte girls dangling at his side) gazed enviously at Loeb, his girlfriend **Plum Sykes**, and his grandmother clinking Veuve Clicquot and snacking on veggies at a back table. "I've got a *total crush* on her," whispered a female artist, eyeing actress **Famke Janssen**. "But I have no clue who she is." Journalist-dandy **Anthony Haden-Guest** entertained himself by sketching the portraits of two chic young things. "Beautiful," he purred, "simply *beautiful*." At the bar, scraggly eighties fashion icon **Stephen Sprouse** sipped a cocktail solo, while photographer **Timothy Greenfield-Sanders** snapped impromptu shots of anyone who came too close to the lens of his bitsy digital camera. Despite all the action, though, **Moby** was standing alone in the hallway, looking pensive and distraught. Was something the matter? "Oh, I'm sorry," he said. "I just get depressed thinking about our new president."

DAVID AMSDEN

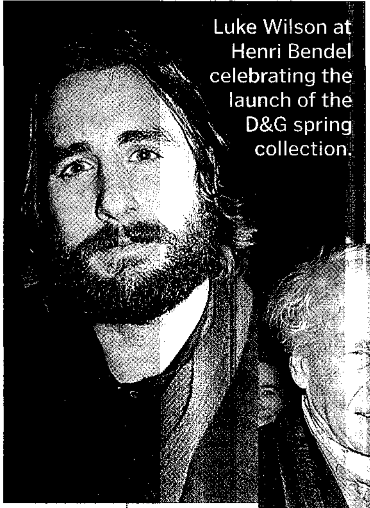
Photographs by Patrick McMullan

Jamie and Hugh G at the Ziegfel Theater for the premiere of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, sponsored by Henri Bendel.

Heidi Klum, Angie Harmon, and Kyra Sedgwick at the American Museum of Natural History for *Glamour*'s Winter Dance.

Ilona and Daniella F
Size 6, Ilona's art-fa
presentation.

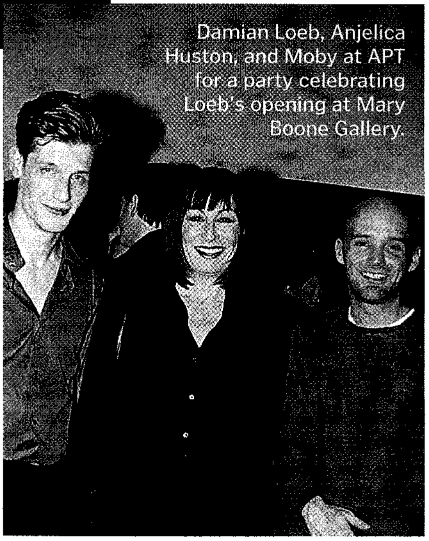
Brooke Astor and Henry Kissinger at Le Cirque 2000 for a gala benefiting Literacy Partners.



Luke Wilson at Henri Bendel celebrating the launch of the D&G spring collection.

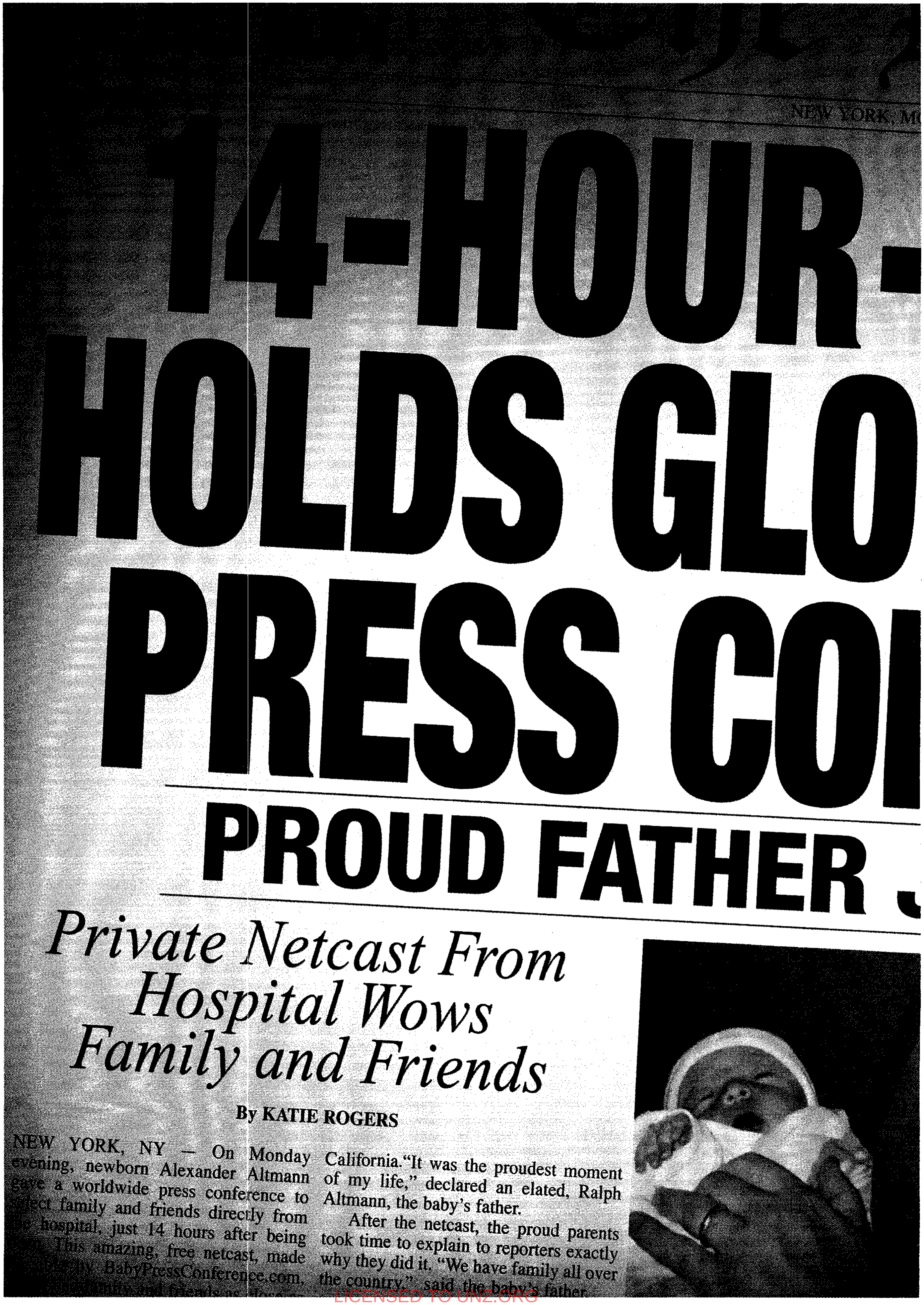
Alan "Ace" Greenberg and Gayle Robinson at the Waldorf-Astoria for Barnard College's annual awards dinner honoring Martha Stewart and Charles R. Lee.

Merce Cunningham, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Lisa Rinehart at City Center for the opening night of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company.



Damian Loeb, Anjelica Huston, and Moby at APT for a party celebrating Loeb's opening at Mary Boone Gallery.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Alexandra Villard de Borchgrave at Le Cirque 2000 celebrating *Villard*, a new book by De Borchgrave and John Cullen.



NEW YORK, M

14-HOUR-
HOLDS GLO
PRESS CO

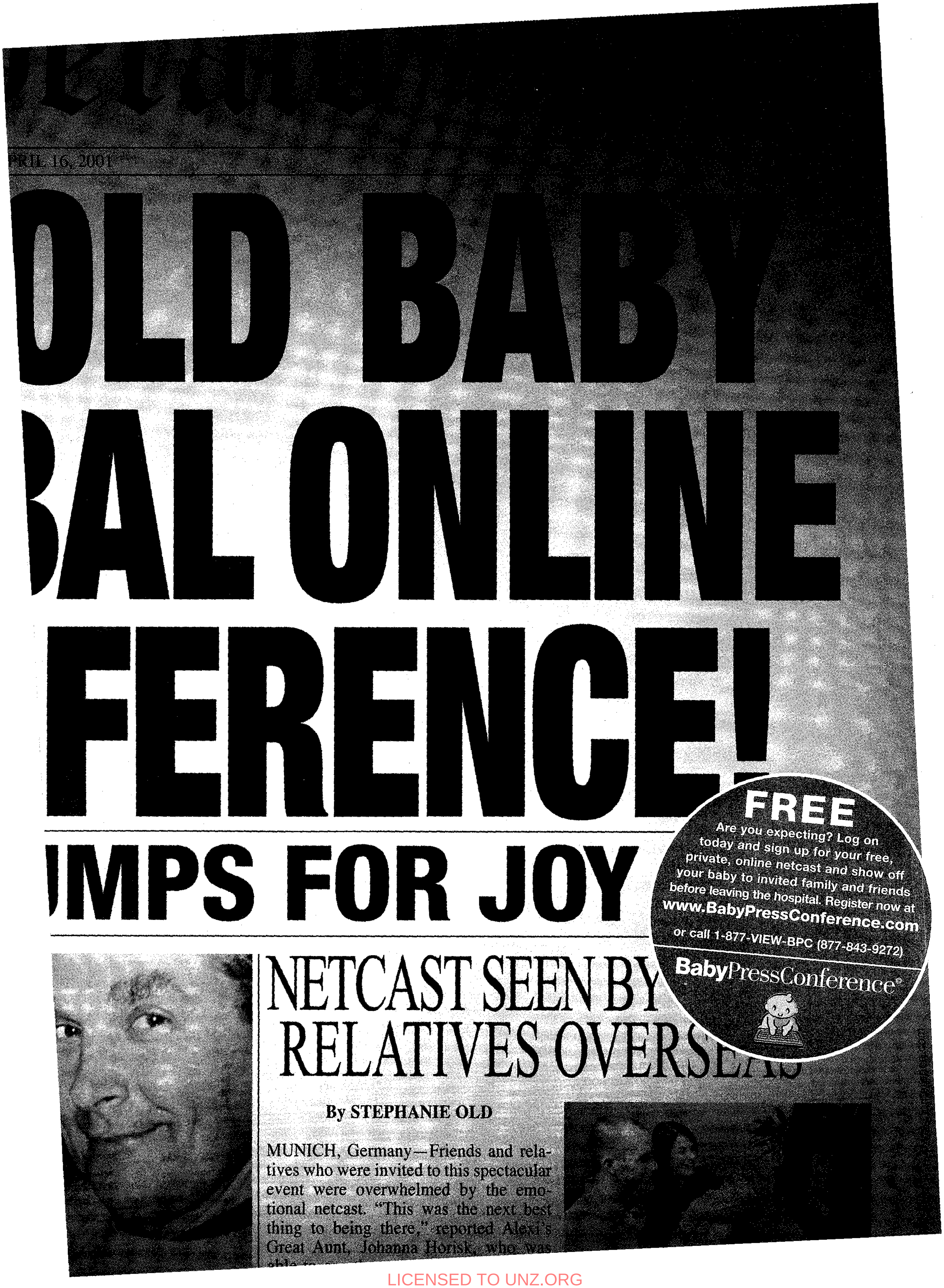
PROUD FATHER

Private Netcast From Hospital Wows Family and Friends

By KATIE ROGERS

NEW YORK, NY — On Monday evening, newborn Alexander Altmann gave a worldwide press conference to select family and friends directly from the hospital, just 14 hours after being [illegible] This amazing, free netcast, made [illegible] by BabyPressConference.com, [illegible] and friends as [illegible] California. "It was the proudest moment of my life," declared an elated, Ralph Altmann, the baby's father.

After the netcast, the proud parents took time to explain to reporters exactly why they did it. "We have family all over the country," said the baby's father.



PRIL 16, 2001

OLD BABY
AL ONLINE
FERENCE!

MPS FOR JOY

NETCAST SEEN BY
RELATIVES OVERS

By STEPHANIE OLD

MUNICH, Germany—Friends and relatives who were invited to this spectacular event were overwhelmed by the emotional netcast. "This was the next best thing to being there," reported Alexi's Great Aunt, Johanna Horisk, who was

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Are you expecting? Log on today and sign up for your free, private, online netcast and show off your baby to invited family and friends before leaving the hospital. Register now at **www.BabyPressConference.com**

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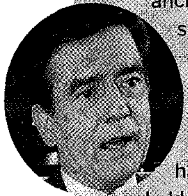
In New York people don't go to the theatre—they go to see hits—Louis Jordan

GOTHAM

G SPOTS
THIS WEEK IN NYC

Edited by Andrew Lee and Carl Swanson



Dan Rather apologizes: The anchor repents for speaking at a Texan Democratic fund-raiser. So when will he apologize for saying, "If a frog had side pockets, he'd carry a handgun"?

Puffy's name change: His post-trial makeover includes a new moniker: "P. Diddy." Apparently, I. P. Freely was already taken.

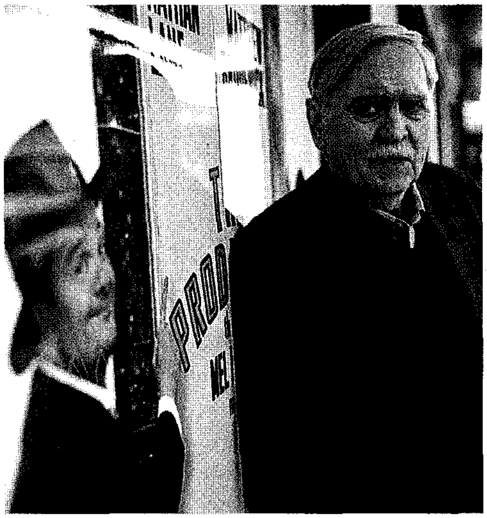
Carl McCall's designing woman: Using public funds, his wife, Joyce Brown, renovates a penthouse for $529,000 at FIT. Someday, she'll make a great First Lady.

The New York *Times'* new addition: The paper announces that it will begin running personals. Single Gray Lady desperately seeks ad revenue.

E-Trade café: The day-trading coffee shop opens in midtown. Now day traders can work in the java biz—just like they did during the last recession.

The *Sopranos* question: In a campaign poll, Andrew Cuomo asks what impact the Mafia series is having on the image of Italian-Americans. Next, he'll poll Michael Corleone on what it's like taking over for your father.
GUY NICOLUCCI

The Yuk-up



Who makes the funniest man in the world laugh? Meet Tom Meehan, Mel Brooks's secret weapon on *The Producers.* By Jeremy Gerard

For decades, Mel Brooks resisted turning *The Producers* into a musical. He'd written numbers for most of his movies, including *The Producers'* mock-dreadful showstopper, "Springtime for Hitler," but he'd failed once on Broadway, and maybe a big-budget show was just too daunting a prospect. So how did he get from "No thanks" to the $10.5 million show steamrolling toward its April 19 opening at the St. James? Well, Hollywood mogul David Geffen wouldn't stop nudging him to do it. But he also had an ace up his sleeve in the form of Thomas Meehan—who, in addition to co-writing *Spaceballs* with him, wrote the book for *Annie,* one of the most successful musicals ever. Mel Brooks may be the funniest *alter kocker* alive, but it is this unassuming Irishman who cracks *him* up.

We're sitting in the back of a handkerchief-size bistro next to the St. James after a Sunday preview: Brooks; his wife, Anne Bancroft; and Meehan. They began working on *The Producers* three years ago and the comfort level is high. A love letter to Broadway boondogglery, it stars Nathan Lane as roguish producer Max Bialystock and Matthew Broderick as his partner in crime, nebbishy accountant Leo Bloom (roles originated in the 1968 movie by Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder). No one is safe on the stage: There are gay jokes and Jewish jokes; a Paul Robeson parody and a chorus line of little old ladies tap dancing with walkers; big bazoombas and high-kicking storm troopers. It's not just an un-p.c. orgy, it's the Plato's Retreat of un-p.c. orgies.

"I can write lines that sound like he wrote them," Meehan explains. "I lead him down the right path, then he comes up with the solution." For example? Brooks wanted to open the show, like the movie, in Max's office. Meehan thought otherwise, and so it begins with "The King of Broadway," an exuberant production number on the opening night of Max's latest flop that tells you everything you need to know about him. "Plus, I weed out his excesses," Meehan adds. "Like an 8-year-old, he gravitates toward bathroom humor."

Growing up in Suffern, New York, Meehan was determined to be the next Faulkner, but yuks kept getting in the way. He spent ten years writing humor pieces for *The New Yorker,* and *still* he wasn't convinced of his fate. "While I was working on *Annie,*" he admits, "I told no friends. I was too embarrassed."

Even now, despite rapturous out-of-town reviews and won't-quit lines at the box office, Meehan's nervous. The 2,000 Year Old Man, on the other hand, is having a ball. "Being back in show business again," Brooks says, "I've been high for three years."

Photographs: top left, AP Wide World; bottom left, Anthony Neste/HBO/Online USA; top right, Pak Fung Wong.

The Bear Market

Date Traders

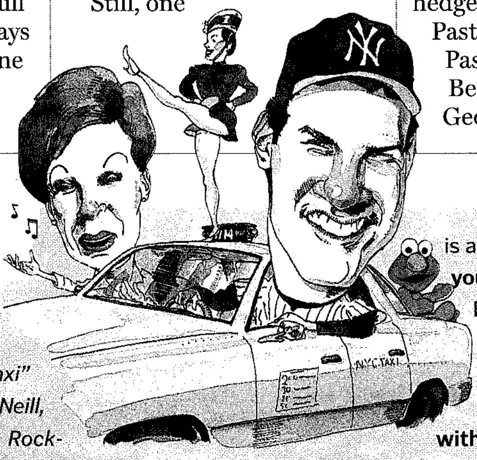
With the Dow's pulchritudinous advances over the past few years essentially erased, are Wall Streeters still sexy? Apparently so, since recessionary concerns didn't seem to dampen the exuberance at the "Most Eligible People on Wall Street" initial public offering at ABC Carpet & Home April 3. Four hundred and fifty donned Diane Von Furstenberg wrap dresses and casual-Fridays khakis to see if they could get a strong buy from any of the 50 banker bachelors and banker bachelorettes (culled from 1,000 nominees by Samantha Daniels, matchmaker from Samantha's Table).

A list of the winners, complete with personal tidbits like "collects wrestling figurines" or "tree skier," was handed out to arriving limited partners who bum-rushed the makeshift bars sandwiched in between jewelry cases full of cocktail rings and displays of Tiffany-esque lamps. One thing for sure: The Wall Streeters thought their biggest assets were what they did off the trading floor. "So you used to be a showgirl in Vegas?" said one finalist to another after scanning her bio. "This is the penny-candy addict I wanted you to meet!" said Daniels, clutching a digital camera and dragging a tall blonde through the throng.

Over by a stack of throw pillows, another thirtysomething finalist, noted for his landscape artistry, professed his love for ornamental grasses. "But my favorite flowers are peonies," he offered. The last three women he'd dated included a ballerina; a nonprofit executive, "which shows selflessness and also business acumen," he noted; and a "Japanese masseuse. Just kidding!"

Still, one has to wonder, do Wall Streeters—no matter how eligible—really want to date their own kind? "If you ask a guy, greater than 50 percent of the time—okay, arguably 75 percent—they're *not* looking for Wall Street women," said an investment banker in a yellow tie. He thinks for a minute. "Actually greater than 75 percent."

But these days, even for dual-MBA relationships, the hard facts of a bear-market courtship cannot be denied. "There'll be less going out and drinking Dom, and more 'Let's find an interesting restaurant that offers great food at decent prices,' " says the 39-year-old managing partner of a hedge fund. "Do you know Pastis? People are going to Pastis instead of Le Bernardin or Jean Georges." SARAH BERNARD



Fast Talk:

"Hack Flack" Allan Fromberg

The TLC's latest "Talking Taxi" series features Yankee Paul O'Neill, the Muppet Elmo, and the Rockettes. Here, the deputy commissioner for public affairs, who's responsible for the buckle-up-for-safety recordings, defends his actions.

Q: Well, what do you have to say for yourself? A: I'm proud to do something that adds to taxi riders' safety. It might not be popular with everybody, but I think it's a real service. **Q: Cab owners are required to pay $75 for the basic device, and $5 to $10 for every set of new messages. Do you think that's fair?** A: Safety enhancements are an accepted cost of doing business in this or any industry—it is absolutely fair. **Q: Which is your favorite recording?** A: Eartha Kitt. That was my best writing. **Q: Elmo has quite a rep as a diva. Was he difficult to work with?** A: No, Elmo was a complete pro. I've taken to calling him "One-Take Elmo." **Q: What's the most bizarre thing that's happened during a recording?** A: We were with Adam West at the bar of the Parker Meridien. The piano player went on duty, so we ended up recording in the men's room. **Q: Eew. Who's your dream celeb?** A: Neil Armstrong. **Q: What would his script say?** A: Hmm. "Buckling your seat belt may be one small step for a passenger, but it's one giant leap for safety." **Q: You're good. Do you always buckle up?** A: Yes, I do. MICHAEL MALONE

THE BIG QUESTION

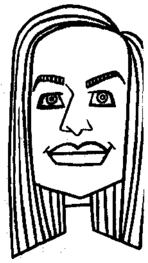
If you were on the mayor's decency board, what would you ban?

William F. Buckley Jr., author, *Elvis in the Morning:* "Stravinsky taught us that 50 years is about right to certify the durability of an artistic creation. I'd recommend that the mayor withhold funds for any exhibit by an artist whose work is less than that age. Let the younger ones seek private sponsors."

Ingrid Sischy, editor-in-chief, *Interview:* "The whole idea of decency boards, the idea that some people appoint themselves as the judges and guardians of what we can and cannot see, do, and think to me is obscene."

Matthew Marks, art dealer: "I would ban Mayor Giuliani from ever appearing in public in drag."

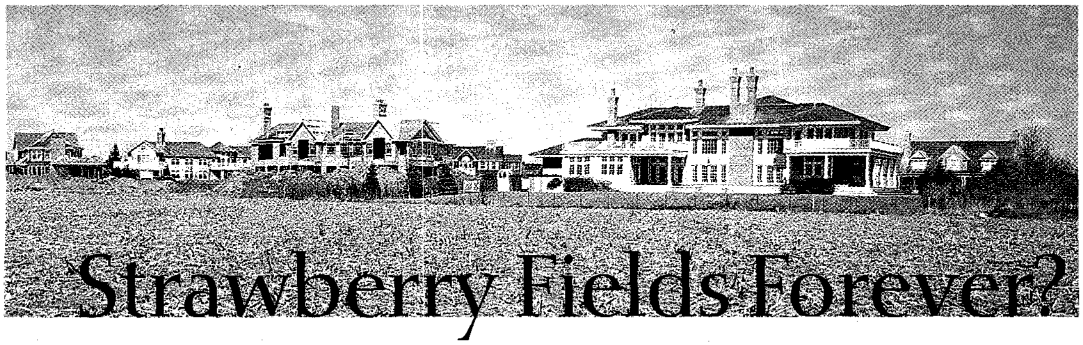
The Reverend Jerry Falwell, Liberty University chancellor: "I would certainly eliminate all bigoted art displays that demean other persons because of religion or color or otherwise. Robert Mapplethorpe's submerging of a cross in his own urine [*sic*] under the guise of art to me was offensive to religious people and Christians everywhere."



Ann Coulter, author, *High Crimes and Misdemeanors: The Case Against Bill Clinton:* "ABC, CBS, NBC, and the New York *Times.*" JADA YUAN

Photograph by Mark Peterson/Corbis SABA. Illustrations: center, Joseph Ciardiello; right, Robert DeMichiell.

Real Estate EDITED BY CARL SWANSON



Strawberry Fields Forever?

Summer rentals are already down. But will the bears save the Hamptons from being paved over with insta-mansions?

Last year, more houses were built in East Hampton "than in any other year since we started keeping records," says town chief building inspector Don Sharkey. "And that was in 1957." The bull-market stampede for huge houses trampled so many open fields that local environmentalists were estimating the entire East End would be filled up in a decade. Now that the bears are out, will they scare off the contractors?

Certainly, demand for housing has eased up a bit. Jan Robinson, president of Hampton Homes, says fewer people are looking for rentals: "It's the worst March we've had since I've been in business." Prices are following. "The rental market's in the toilet," agrees a developer who owns a six-bedroom place with a gunite pool in Bridgehampton. "It backs onto a horse farm. Last summer, I got $50,000 for August; this year, I'll be lucky to get $40,000."

"We're seeing lower prices," says Frank Newbold of Sotheby's, and owners who are suddenly willing to negotiate. With sales slow, he says, "the days of pricing houses for more than they're worth are over."

But what about development? Sharkey says permits were up in January, down in February, and then back up last month. Many of these were for tear-downs, however, since the town recently instated a moratorium on subdivisions of more than ten acres.

Jed Schutz of Windemere Development sees "pockets of demand: a village location, a waterfront house. With the more unique properties, there's no slack-off of buyers." But developer David Schwartz of Haddonfield & Associates says, "I used to build six to eight houses a year," at $3 million to $7 million. "This year, I plan to build two to three."

"Restrictions on new construction help keep housing prices strong," maintains Agawam Realty's Robert Lohman. Still, he continues, "I just don't see big houses getting gobbled up north of the highway the way they are consumed south of the highway."

One East End builder predicts that "a year from now, the view from the Montauk Highway will be of abandoned houses half built."

BARBARA WAGNER

The Iceman Leaveth

Out of Fifth Avenue

The Sundance Kid must have been feeling awfully optimistic to put his penthouse at 1030 Fifth Avenue on the market for $15 million. **Robert Redford** bought his three-bedroom co-op replete with two wood-burning fireplaces in 1997 for $3.7 million after moving from 955 Fifth Avenue. Then, for some reason, he decorated it entirely in New Mexico style. If that or the idea of barefoot jaunts in the park appeals to you, call Kathy Sloane of Brown Harris Stevens, the "Democratic" broker famed for finding *casas* for Clinton and his fund-raising friend Denise Rich. But the inside's certainly, uh, un-Manhattan, and at least one broker who's seen it says that the view out isn't much, either: "There's a parapet surrounding the apartment that blocks any skyline." Redford has star-friendly neighbors—including Mike Nichols and Diane Sawyer—but brokers say the high asking price is still an indecent proposal.

MORGAN GOLDBERG

Big Deals

Washington Heights

West 162nd Street

6-bed, $3\frac{1}{2}$-bath, 3,952-square-foot house. Ask: $799,000. Sell: $799,000. Five months on market.

"I wanted something similar to my Victorian workingman's row house in San Francisco," says cabaret pianist Peter Mintun. What did he get? An 1896 four-story limestone house off St. Nicholas Avenue, with seven fireplaces, oak and mahogany trim, and enough room for a nine-foot-long concert grand, two smaller pianos, and a collection of antique phonographs. "The moment I stepped in, I knew this was it because it was so well preserved," he says. "This is the highest sale in Washington Heights," crows broker Willie Kathryn Suggs, who finally sold it after the seller kept pulling it off the market. (The seller moved to New Rochelle.) Mintun and his partner moved east two weeks ago. JOY ARMSTRONG

Chelsea

22 West 15th Street

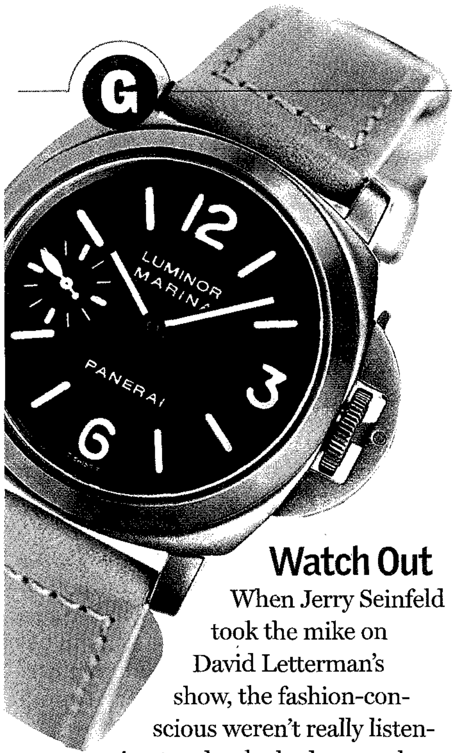
2-bed, 2-bath, 1,350-square-foot condo. Ask: $1.57 million. Sell: $1.59 million. Charges and taxes: $1,345. One month on market.

When a 30-year-old investment banker bought this penthouse last August, he wasn't planning to flip it—he thought he'd found the perfect bachelor pad. But when an irresistible job offer in Boston suddenly popped up, he rerouted the custom furniture already on the way and sold the apartment for a $295,000 profit, according to the broker, Douglas Elliman's Tristan Harper. The buyers are a young couple who were already living in the building. EMILY GITTER

Photographs: top, Kenneth Chen; bottom, Robin Platzer.

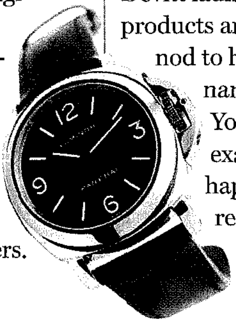
AMY LAROCCA

Style

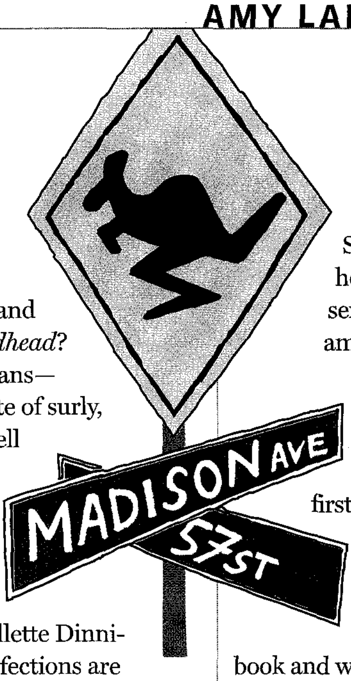


Watch Out

When Jerry Seinfeld took the mike on David Letterman's show, the fashion-conscious weren't really listening to what he had to say about his three-year absence (nothing). They were checking out his Officine Panerai watch ($2,350–$10,000 at Tourneau, 12 East 57th Street; 212-758-7300). Seinfeld isn't the Italian watchmaker's only fan: Hugh Grant, Ricky Martin, and Mike Myers all wear the brand. Ralph Lauren, a Panerai collector, sports one in a recent ad campaign. Originally made for the Italian Navy (the company also created torpedo-launching sights), Panerai watches only became available to civilians in the early nineties. Now that they've been spotted on so many high-profile fashion wrists, expect an army of followers.



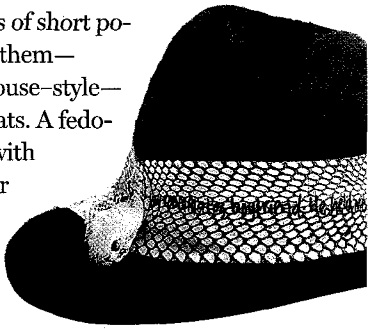
Down Under Wear



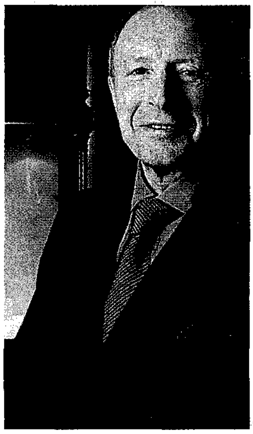
Have we had enough of the English, with their skinny trousers and fish and chips and *bedhead*? Looks like it. Australians—spearheaded by a spate of surly, hunky stars like Russell Crowe and Hugh Jackman—have launched the latest invasion. Aussies are making major inroads in design (Collette Dinnigan's lacy, beaded confections are flying off racks at Bond 07, 7 Bond Street; 212-677-8487); some fashion editors have begun to add Sydney's fashion week to their biannual-travel calendar. Manhattanites are even ingesting 'roo steak at Aussie restaurant Eight Mile Creek (240 Mulberry Street; 212-431-4635)—Vegemite, however, is less popular. And Australian makeup artist Sue Devitt launched a line of sweet bath products and makeup at Barneys. In a nod to her new market, Devitt has named her lip glosses after New York beaches (Fire Island, for example, and Georgica). Perhaps New York women aren't ready, after all, for gloss in Bondi blue.

Hat Tale

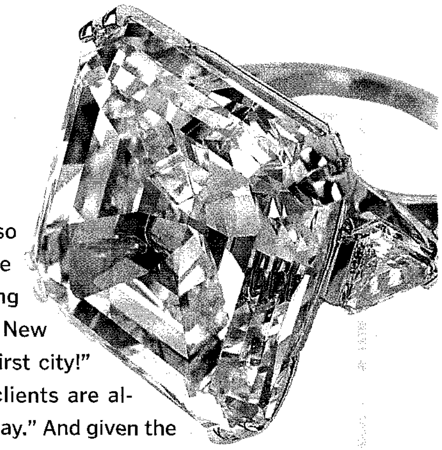
Since Eugenia Kim opened her shop in 1999, her sharp, sexy hats have been a favorite among hat-wearing downtown girls. Emma Forrest, an English novelist (*Namedropper*) and one of those hat-happy girls, bought her first Eugenia Kim original in December. When Kim noticed her customer's name on the credit card, she was thrilled; she'd just finished Forrest's book and was a fan. So the two decided to turn their mutual admiration into something productive. Forrest wrote a series of short poems and put them—Stephen Sprouse–style—onto Kim's hats. A fedora trimmed with snakeskin, for example, bears a short tale of a girl sleeping with her roommate's boyfriend ($435 at Eugenia Kim, 203 East 4th Street; 212-673-9787). "Do you think it's offensive?" Forrest wonders. More likely, it's just fashion.



Smart Set



Laurence Graff



Laurence Graff is not worried about the recession. "We decided we wanted a presence here," says the gray-haired English jeweler of his first New York shop, set to open this week at 721 Madison Avenue. "We'll be here forever—when the market is down, when the market is up." Graff, who started his business 40 years ago, specializes in diamonds: big, lucid stones in colors like pink, blue, and—Sophia Loren's favorite—yellow. The settings are classic and awards-show perfect, with a dazzling range of chokers, bracelets, and heavy, tiered earrings. This year, Graff will also open shops in Dubai and on the Floating City—so it made sense, he reasons, to bring his wares to New York. "It's the first city!" he says. "Our clients are always here anyway." And given the way some of us are still spending, he'll inevitably attract more. Who, after all, doesn't want a big rock? "Diamonds are a token of love," Graff points out. "You can never have enough."

Photographs: still lifes by Joe Scafuro; portrait by Karen Pearson. Illustration by David Navascues.

Michael Wolff THIS MEDIA LIFE

Prince Andrew

Can Andrew Cuomo combine his father's legacy and his own wonkish good works with some Kennedy charm to stage a return to Albany?

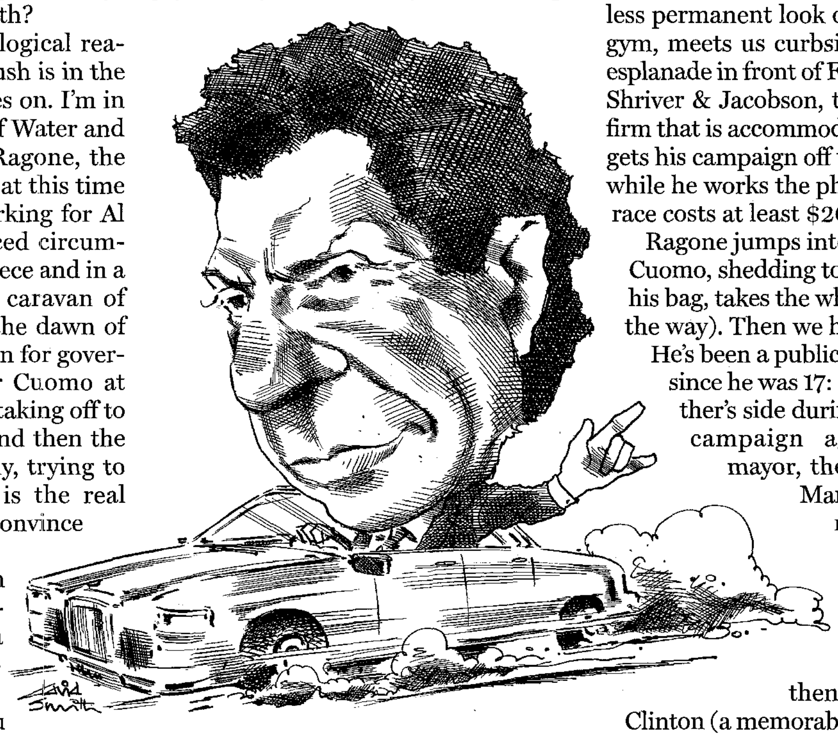
THE REAL THING IS A MYTHOLOGICAL SPECIES searched for by political reporters and campaign operatives. It's a kind of great horse, or beautiful athlete, or incredible crush. There are, of course, not too many sightings of the real thing anymore.

In this day and age, the real thing doesn't become a politician. And if one did, would we be able to recognize it anyway, or is that just so over with?

Still, if only for anthropological reasons, and because George Bush is in the White House, the search goes on. I'm in a parked car on the corner of Water and Whitehall. I'm with Peter Ragone, the same political op I was with at this time a year ago when he was working for Al Gore. In significantly reduced circumstances (stripped of his earpiece and in a rented Taurus instead of a caravan of Suburbans), he is back, at the dawn of the Andrew Cuomo campaign for governor. Peter, who worked for Cuomo at HUD for nine months before taking off to join the Hillary campaign and then the Gore campaign, is, naturally, trying to convince me that Cuomo is the real thing. No doubt, trying to convince himself too.

I'm open. It's spring in New York. And there's something about this point in a campaign—no real organization, not too many handlers, few speeches (at least you haven't heard the speech a million times)—that puts reporters and candidates in a flirtatious mood.

I was formally introduced to Cuomo a few weeks before. Early in a campaign, or before one even starts, candidates visit media offices for off-the-record meetings. There's a catered lunch at a conference table, and then the candidate gives a pitch and takes questions. It's hard to say what you're grading a candidate on in such a situation—part policy (always a small part), part look and feel, and part patter. At any rate, my mind didn't wander too much during Cuomo's pitch over the salmon and wheat-berry salad. He told a good story. He was funny. He seemed eager to prove himself in a not-too-ham-handed way. In fact, he had the part down so well—an intelligent, good-looking, wry, hard-working, liberal sort of guy—that you necessarily became suspicious. Where's the body?



Even the Mario thing is subtle and effective, I was surprised to see. Andrew has the rubbery face and the cadence—but not the imperiousness. And despite my better democratic and meritocratic judgment, I can start to see why the generation thing works in politics—the brand recognition and, too, a sense of getting an upgrade.

On the other hand, I can't imagine why, if he's smart and funny and ambitious, he's a politician.

SO I GOT INTO THE CAR. THE CAR IS THE natural element for a politician. Politicians are not creatures of offices or restaurants so much as of vehicles. It's an intimate act for a reporter to strap in beside a politician ("I'll get you in the car" are the words you wait to hear from a candidate's people).

Cuomo, who seems to have a more or less permanent look of coming from the gym, meets us curbside at the concrete esplanade in front of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, the Wall Street law firm that is accommodating him while he gets his campaign off the ground (that is, while he works the phones—a New York race costs at least $20 million).

Ragone jumps into the backseat, and Cuomo, shedding top coat and stowing his bag, takes the wheel (only he knows the way). Then we head to Brooklyn.

He's been a public figure in New York since he was 17: constantly at his father's side during the first quixotic campaign against Koch for mayor, then, at 23, running Mario's winning gubernatorial campaign, then getting his housing-project business off the ground, then marrying a Kennedy, then getting close with Clinton (a memorable scene in *Primary Colors* is when the impressive son of New York's Governor Ozio comes to meet with the unimpressive southern governor), then a cabinet post. This familiarity makes him seem a little like someone you knew in high school. Except now, pumped on success steroids, he's better-dressed, more comfortable with himself, and more interesting than you remember.

We start in immediately on the housing problems of the former secretary of Housing and Urban Development. His wife and three kids are still in their home

Illustration by David Smith.

in Washington; he's staying at a friend's apartment in Manhattan. (On a friend's couch? In a celebrity friend's pied-à-terre? He doesn't say.) They'll settle in New York when the kids finish school in June. His wife, Kerry, wants a house in Westchester, but he doesn't want the commute (nor does he seem like a suburban guy—he's not going to make that Clinton mistake). Which means, he says, he needs three and a half bedrooms in Manhattan.

"A classic seven," I tell him.

And that means, his wife says, private schools, which he seems rather unfamiliar with and vaguely irritated at or possibly intimidated by.

In fact, I can tell him what private schools Kennedy kids go to.

It occurs to me it might have been more interesting to hang with him looking for an apartment on the Upper East Side, rather than going where we're going—down Atlantic Avenue, passing the Bed-Stuy Redevelopment Corporation started by Robert Kennedy, the father-in-law he never knew, by the refrigerator-equipment plant on the corner of Utica and Atlantic once owned by Cuomo's mother's father, and then deeper into Brooklyn to East New York.

I'M CURIOUS ABOUT CUOMO AND THE CLASS thing—the divide between Manhattan and the boroughs, between the Cuomos and the Kennedys. Mario always made class an interesting and confusing subtext of the Cuomo message. He was at once a Queens pol and yet the most patrician figure in American politics. In some sense, way too patrician for American politics. But obviously not enough—in any discussion about Mario and the presidency, somebody always brings up the Mafia thing ("Well, you know why he didn't run . . .").

For his part, Andrew segues artfully between Italian-from-Queens-ness and purebred-yuppie-ness. It's unclear which Cuomo is realer.

"Why did you go to the schools you went to?"—Fordham and then Albany Law School—I ask him, because it seems enough out of place on his résumé—and because we're pretty much the same age, and our backgrounds aren't that different, and why pretend it isn't a curious thing.

He defends the schools but understands what I'm asking: Why would the son of Mario Cuomo go to local, commuter schools? Why would an ambitious guy not have been more ambitious (Bill Clinton from Arkansas made it to Yale)?

He pulls on his rubber face. He doesn't seem defensive (certainly not in the sense of Lyndon Johnson among the Kennedy Ivy Leaguers). "I went to a boys' parochial school in Queens. I don't think anybody went to an Ivy League school from my high school," he says, and shrugs. "We went to St. John's. Mario went to St. John's. Fordham was a step up. Then there's affording an Ivy League school. I don't know how we would have done that."

"Like everyone else," I say, "you'd get loans."

"You know, Mario was a rebel. Even if he could have gone to those schools—he was turning his back on these people. The Wall Street–lawyer crowd. He was a Brooklyn lawyer."

So when did the striving begin?

The whole family has traded up. He's married a Kennedy, his sister has married Kenneth Cole, and another sister married the millionaire video producer of *Buns of Steel* (of course, there may be some feeling of a mutual trade-up here); his brother is a television personality who hangs with Hamptons socialites. Even Mario and Matilda live on Sutton Place now.

"Your kids won't go to Fordham and Albany Law School."

"I know that," he says, with some fatefulness. He talks about their earning their own money, and his not buying them cars, and getting them to work real jobs over the summer.

"I'm curious about Cuomo and the class thing—the divide between Manhattan and the boroughs, between the Cuomos and the Kennedys."

"Right," I say laughing.

But I know what he's saying: It's a lot harder nowadays to preserve than to escape your roots. In a sense, Andrew is the last of a kind (he may well have the last Queens accent—in the future it will have a much different, polyglot sound). Despite top-flight yuppie accomplishments, he's also uniquely old-fashioned: apprenticed to the father; made, effectively, a political runner; then graduating to ward heeler and promoted to consiglieri at an early age. I don't know how you save that.

On the other hand, the last thing Andrew Cuomo wants to be is a Queens pol—even a princely one.

WE REACH THE SITE. POLITICIANS NEED A backdrop. Hands to shake, backs to clasp. A photo op even without photographs.

We've come out to the first HELP project. This is the thing that Cuomo did as a 27-year-old: *He built housing for the homeless.*

That, however, is an abstract or bureaucratic concept—which is, no doubt, why he's hustled me out here to see what he's built. As he tells it, he visited the notorious Hotel Martinique, where, given the rules of federal-assistance laws, the city was housing homeless people in squalor and degradation for a near-luxury price tag during the seventies and eighties. Andrew, who had left working for his dad and spent two years with the Manhattan D.A., and who was then restlessly practicing law, figured you could take that federal money and, within federal rules, do a lot better. In addition, he had a Clintonesque-third-way point of view, which is that the homeless are homeless for reasons other than the fact that they have no homes—you had to rehab the whole family unit.

Because he's the governor's son, and because he is, supposedly, a son of a bitch (he was, and perhaps still is, relatively unpopular in New York political circles, unlike, say, Hugh Carey's kids in the seventies, who ran restaurants and were very popular), he gets his building built.

One big test of public housing must be how it looks a generation or so after it's been in use. This place opened, with Cuomo as landlord and night manager, in 1988. Thirteen years later, it's a liberal proof of something (unless somebody went running ahead to round up the crackheads and clean the graffiti and fix the windows). It's a clean, sunny, orderly place. GED classes are in progress as we wander the halls, peeking into windows, with Andrew shaking the occasional hand; so is computer training, day care, exercise for pregnant women. The premise is: Families move in here from shelters; with social support, the families get themselves together; then they move into a permanent place.

Across the street is the permanent housing that Cuomo built. It's a four-story rectangular building overlooking a large, landscaped interior courtyard. Cuomo, who I imagined can talk about public housing as knowledgeably as anyone in America, has many points to make (if you like this sort of stuff, and I do, it's a good talk—why there's always an el in such neighborhoods; why cities always dump facilities in poor neighborhoods, which then contributes to keeping the neighborhood poor). One of his most obvious points is about architecture. Because this is a well-designed building, it sends none of the messages that public housing usually sends (i.e., to the people who live here: *You're prisoners;* to the taxpayers who pay for them to live here: *They're criminals*).

Andrew has created St. Mark's Square in East New York. A staircase at the corner forms the campanile; the common rooms and community space (they've held weddings here) form the basilica-like structure; the apartments, looking into the courtyard, the procuratie.

This is his pitch: Liberal solutions can work (forgetting the fact that, here in East New York, we're also surrounded by former generations of public housing, like sedimentary layers, that didn't work). Government, or, in middle-of-the-road-speak, a public-private partnership, can make something functional, economical, uplifting, and dignified; indeed, there are 3,500 people in HELP housing—in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, Westchester, Philadelphia. The other part of his pitch, which I find hard to resist, is that he's the only modern-American politician who's actually put a roof over someone's head.

"I don't think he has any illusions about politics or people in politics. He knows it's largely low-grade work. **A politico is not high up on the doing-big-things ladder.**"

It's very movielike. The young, idealistic politician against this background of accomplishment and hope. It's almost eerie in its foreboding—where's the body?

HE COURTED HIS WIFE OUT HERE. ON THEIR first date, he took her, on his Harley, to see her father's Bed-Stuy project, and then he took her to see his own deal.

He shoehorns his wife into almost every conversation in a way that suggests that he either thinks the Kennedy thing is the biggest political asset he's got going for him, or she's been after him to get some credit for herself (*It's not all about you!*).

Or it may be that, like many liberal Democrats of a certain era, he has a Kennedy fixation—he's just taken his a little further than most.

Peter Ragone tells me that Andrew was giving a talk the other day to which he'd brought his family, and, in the middle of his speech, his young daughter walked out onto the floor. "Upstaged by a Kennedy," Andrew said proudly. (I ask him if he thinks of his children as Kennedys. He says, with some amazement, that they have Kennedy mannerisms and gestures.)

I think it's part of the class thing.

You can make the case that there's a lost generation of pols. If you were a hotshot in the eighties and nineties, you didn't go into politics—you became a finance guy, or technology guy, or media mogul. But Andrew, because he had to help his father, or because he was an underachiever, or because it was the way out of Queens, did go into politics, and he really doesn't want to be thought the less of for it. In addition, even putting aside the doing-good part, housing the poor seems, as he talks about it, at least as interesting as being a finance guy or technology entrepreneur.

Still, I don't think he has any illusions about politics or people in politics. He knows it's largely low-grade work. A politico is not high up on the doing-big-things ladder. When he talks about Pataki, you feel that's what he objects to most—Pataki is small-time (he seems embarrassed that this is his opponent, that they would be in any way comparable); Carl McCall, too. These are just political-class guys.

Whereas he's pitching himself on a higher level. So even though he is a vastly more accomplished politician with a brighter future than anyone currently named Kennedy, I think he thinks the Kennedy thing helps dignify his endeavors (there are rumors, though, of dissatisfaction among the Kennedy men about a non-Kennedy using the brand). He's in the Kennedy political class and everyone else is in another political class.

YOU GET A POWERFUL SENSE THAT IT IS ANdrew who is searching as hard as anyone for the real thing. He has forged a filial bond not only with the Kennedys but with Bill Clinton—he's one of the few Clintonites to have lasted the entire term.

Then, too, he's among the most loyal and dedicated Gore-ites (if Gore had won the presidential race, in all likelihood Cuomo would not be running now but would have ascended to some higher, executive-branch place)—although he cringes at the thought of the Gore campaign.

And while I don't see any trace at all of reluctance about running—after all, he's been doing this for more than twenty years; in some sense, there has never been anyone, at least since Bobby Kennedy, as well prepared to run for public office as Andrew Cuomo—I wonder if knowing what he knows must not engender a certain painful self-consciousness. What is your chance of not disappointing yourself and everyone else?

Indeed, the one liberal giant who oddly, or not so oddly, he doesn't seem to identify with is Mario. Mario's ambivalence is something to steer clear of.

We're sitting back on Water Street, the car idling. I'm starving, but politicians never go out to eat (they scarf something down and go on to the next event). Peter Ragone is scrunched up in the backseat, paying rapt attention to Cuomo. I wonder if he's worried about Cuomo's motormouth—Cuomo is, for a politician, unusually aware of the process of being a politician, and oddly willing to talk about it. (Most politicians are absent people—there but not there. Whatever they say, they've said innumerable times. You never have a real conversation.)

He's demonstrating for me the Clinton touch: holding my shoulder, taking my hand, stroking my knee. It's perfect mimicry. He seems to understand both the humor of it and the power of it.

"He knew every nuance of what he was doing," he says, with some awe, about Clinton. "The effect of touching you there, or touching you here."

The real thing, Andrew seems to be saying, is, of course, always partly a phony.

He goes on to a brief deconstruction of Mario—that he could accept an intellectual relationship with the voters, but was not at all interested in an emotional one. So, equally, the real thing may fail because it's not phony enough.

He keeps chewing: What does it take to be the kind of person who voters or the media want you to be, or think they want you to be—and do you want to be that person (Gore, he believes, in the end did not)? And what does it take to be a politician who is not tainted by being a politician?

The question he seems to be trying to answer, at the beginning of his first campaign for office, is: How far is it possible to distance yourself from the pack of hacks, seducers, wonks, special-interest-group guys, and fathers' sons?

"What do you think?" asks Ragone, after Cuomo has gone back to his office, and we go looking for a sandwich.

Not to jinx it, and because you always end up paying for a political crush, I say, "He looks good, but there's a long way to go." ■

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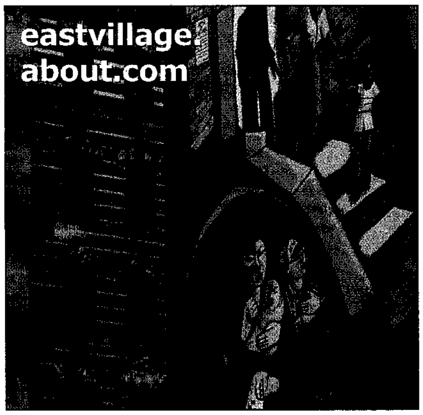
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The Next Nader?

Ralph Nader tapped into an angry liberalism that has been sleeping throughout the boom. Who'll inherit the movement? Don't laugh—John McCain.

IF YOU WERE PHIL DONAHUE, IT WOULD BE tough to go to the supermarket. Some people would recognize you from your years as a talk-show host. They'd probably be friendly. Others would recognize you from your months as America's most visible Ralph Nader supporter. They probably wouldn't be. I saw Phil Donahue the other night. I asked him what it's like to go shopping these days. Do angry Democrats shout at you in the aisles? "Yes," he replied, "and when it happens, I am proud to tell them if I had to do it over, I would."

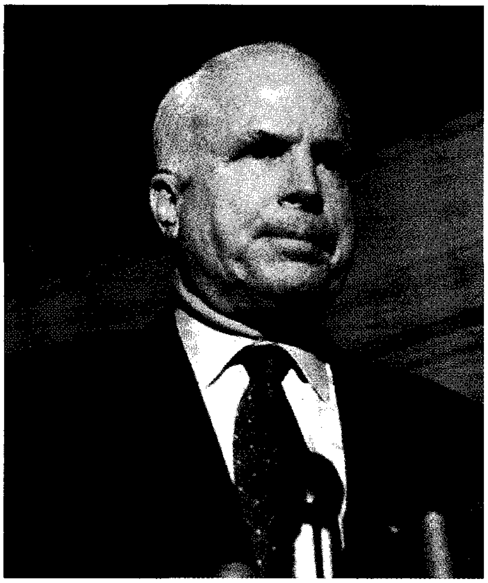
He means it. Phil Donahue is totally unrepentant. He doesn't regret stumping for Ralph Nader. He doesn't apologize for the damage Nader did to Al Gore's campaign. He doesn't seem particularly upset that George W. Bush is president. Donahue recognizes few distinctions between the two major parties, but if forced to choose, he probably dislikes the Democrats more.

"McAuliffe & Co.," he calls them. "The corporate-money-besotted Democratic Party." His eyes bulge when he talks like this. He doesn't blink. If there's one thing that makes Donahue mad, it's the fact that Big Business runs the country. In the tiny world where Phil Donahue resides—at the leftward terminus of American politics—"we don't think corporate power is good, as both parties feel. No, no, no." Nor does Donahue believe that capitalism is a fundamentally benevolent system, or that encouraging a free market is the most democratic means of arranging a society. Donahue considers these notions propaganda, spread by the "industrialists."

My first thought was, *What an odd thing to say.* When was the last time you heard the word *industrialists* used as an epithet? It has the flavor of a Rockwell Kent painting or a tract by William Z. Foster, as outdated as it is unfashionable. My second thought was, *What ever happened to people like Phil Donahue?* There used to be a lot of them. There aren't anymore.

Twenty years ago, it was easy to find liberals willing to criticize the market, or even to question the basic assumptions of capitalism. Then, suddenly, they seemed to disappear. Clinton is one obvious cause. It's harder to attack affluence when the man you voted for is loudly taking credit for it.

At the same time, the appearance of the average tycoon changed. This made things even more confusing for traditional liberals. "They weren't used to the fact that they should be protesting people who wear Birkenstocks to work," says David Brooks, author of *Bobos in Paradise.* "The corporate titan used to be a white guy in a suit. Suddenly, your corporate titan is Steve Jobs, who reads alternative magazines and supports alternative foundations. How do you handle that?"



Fearless leader: John McCain.

THE SHORT ANSWER IS, YOU DON'T. OR IN any case, most liberals didn't. Over time, you stopped hearing liberals talk so much about the poor and the homeless and the tragedy of income disparities. The country got welfare reform and NAFTA. Except around election time, you heard less from and about organized labor. In general, there was a dramatic reduction in whining about the unfairness of American society. Most of these changes were good.

But not all. Class-warfare liberalism may have been annoying, but it served a purpose. Greed isn't a positive thing. Liberals used to say this. Accumulating wealth for its own sake is a pretty boring way to spend one's life. Liberals pointed this out, too. Selfishness is bad. Making money doesn't make you heroic. These were valuable sentiments.

So, it turns out, was liberal guilt. Liberals don't seem to feel very guilty anymore. New Economy liberals are the least guilty-feeling of all. A couple of years ago, I had dinner with a group of rich dot-com types in San Francisco. One of them, an ardent Democrat who had recently made millions quickly and easily, explained that he didn't feel guilty at all about anything. Guilty rich people, he said, are "fucked up."

I used to agree, until I met the alternative. Guilt provides some perspective. Without it, it's easy to believe you deserve what you have.

If you believe you deserve what you have, you could come to think that the more you have, the more deserving you are. From there, it's a quick trip to the obvious conclusion: The people with the most are the best people.

This attitude is bad for the human soul. More to the point, it's terrible for journalism. For the past ten years, the media generally have sucked up to corporate power without apology. It has been, in the business press particularly, an orgy of throne-sniffing. This has ended. The hangover will soon set in. Imagine, if you can, the fits of journalistic hand-wring-

Photograph by Kevin LaMarque/Reuters/TimePix.

ing to come, the wailing and the breast-beating, the endless stream of self-flagellating critiques in media-studies journals. I can hardly wait.

In the meantime, an exhibit from the orgy: Consider the treatment of a single fantastically rich guy—Nathan Myhrvold of Microsoft—in two stories that ran a few years ago in *Fortune*. In the first, from July 1998, we learn this about Myhrvold: He is "a gourmand who loves French food." For vacation, he plans to go "fly-fishing in Mongolia."

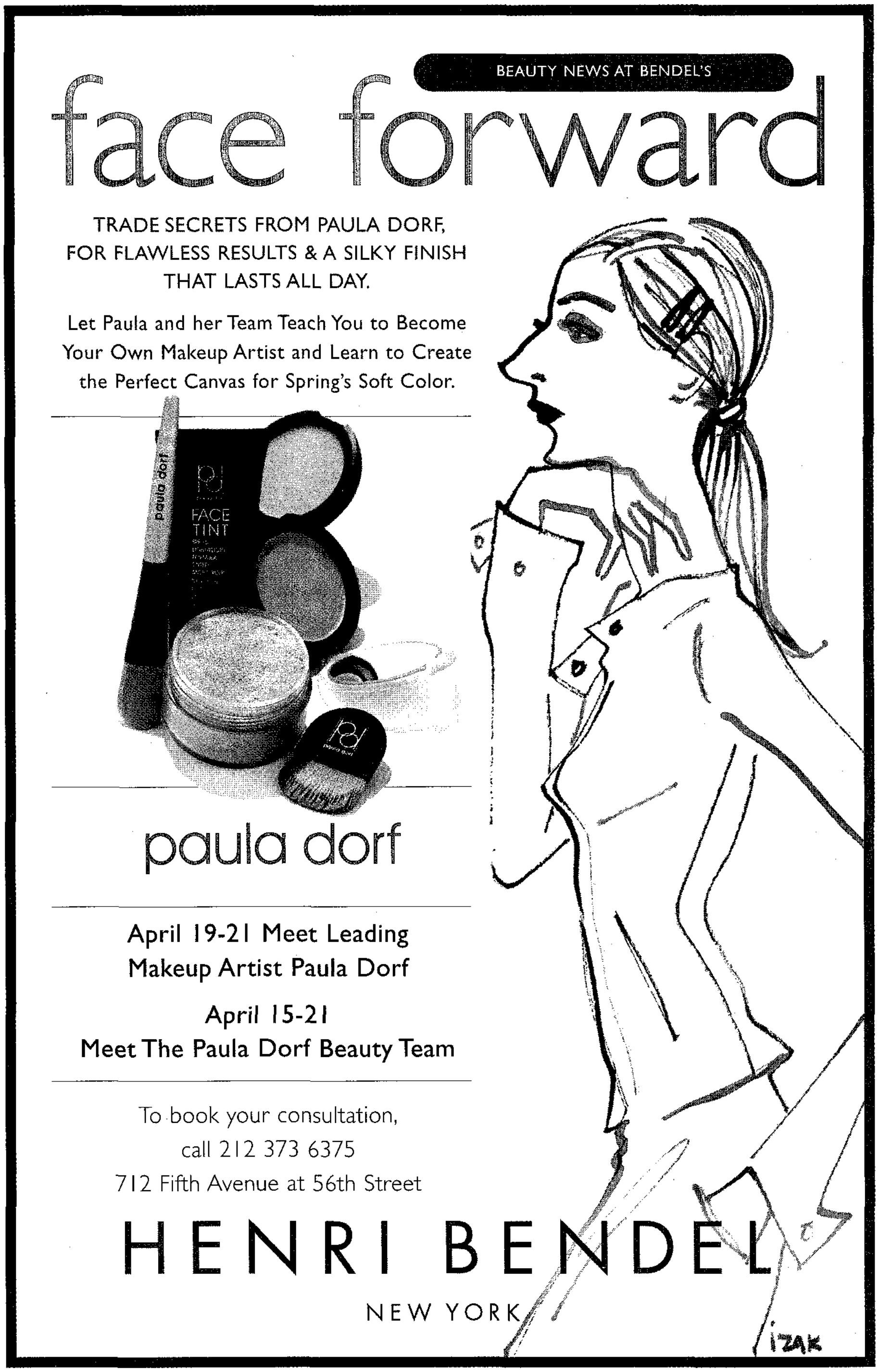
In the next *Fortune* profile, which ran the following July, we learn this about Myhrvold: He's leaving Microsoft. ("In essence," Myhrvold is quoted as saying in the previous profile without any clarifying commentary from the reporter, "the DoJ wants Microsoft to fire me so we can't innovate in products.") This is sad, since Myhrvold is a "smiling, cuddly" man with "many interests" who is "also clearly brilliant, charismatic, and up-front about being rich."

The interview itself takes place on the patio at Le Cirque. Myhrvold boasts that the kitchen in the vast new house he is building was designed by the same person who did the kitchen at Le Cirque. Except, Myhrvold says, "mine's better."

The whole thing reads like a *GQ* cover story on Julia Roberts. But that's not the worst part. The worst part is, nobody seemed to notice. Nobody mocked *Fortune* for running it, probably because the same story could have run in virtually any other magazine.

WHERE DO THE NADERITES GO FROM here? Probably not back to Nader, maybe not even back to the Democratic Party. The Democrats you hear most often mentioned as candidates in 2004—Joe Lieberman, Evan Bayh, John Edwards—are if anything even more offensive to liberal sensibilities than Al Gore was. Paul Wellstone is an articulate spokesman for traditional liberalism, but it is hard to imagine him becoming a national figure.

Which leaves John McCain. McCain isn't a liberal, strictly speaking. On a number of issues that matter to the left—abortion, American intervention abroad—he's at least as conservative as George W. Bush. He's also a free-trader. On the other hand, McCain consistently hits the right thematic notes: for the role of the individual in politics, against the corrupting influence of money in American life. He's personally appealing. He's restless in his job. Watch him closely over the next few months. If he starts revising his positions on the WTO, it could be a sign: McCain-Donahue 2004. ■



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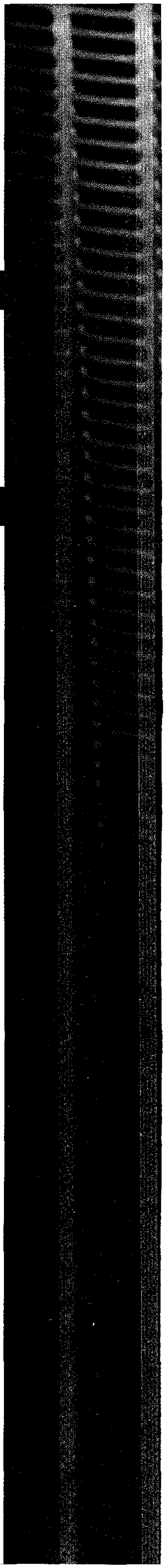
CITIZEN MIKE

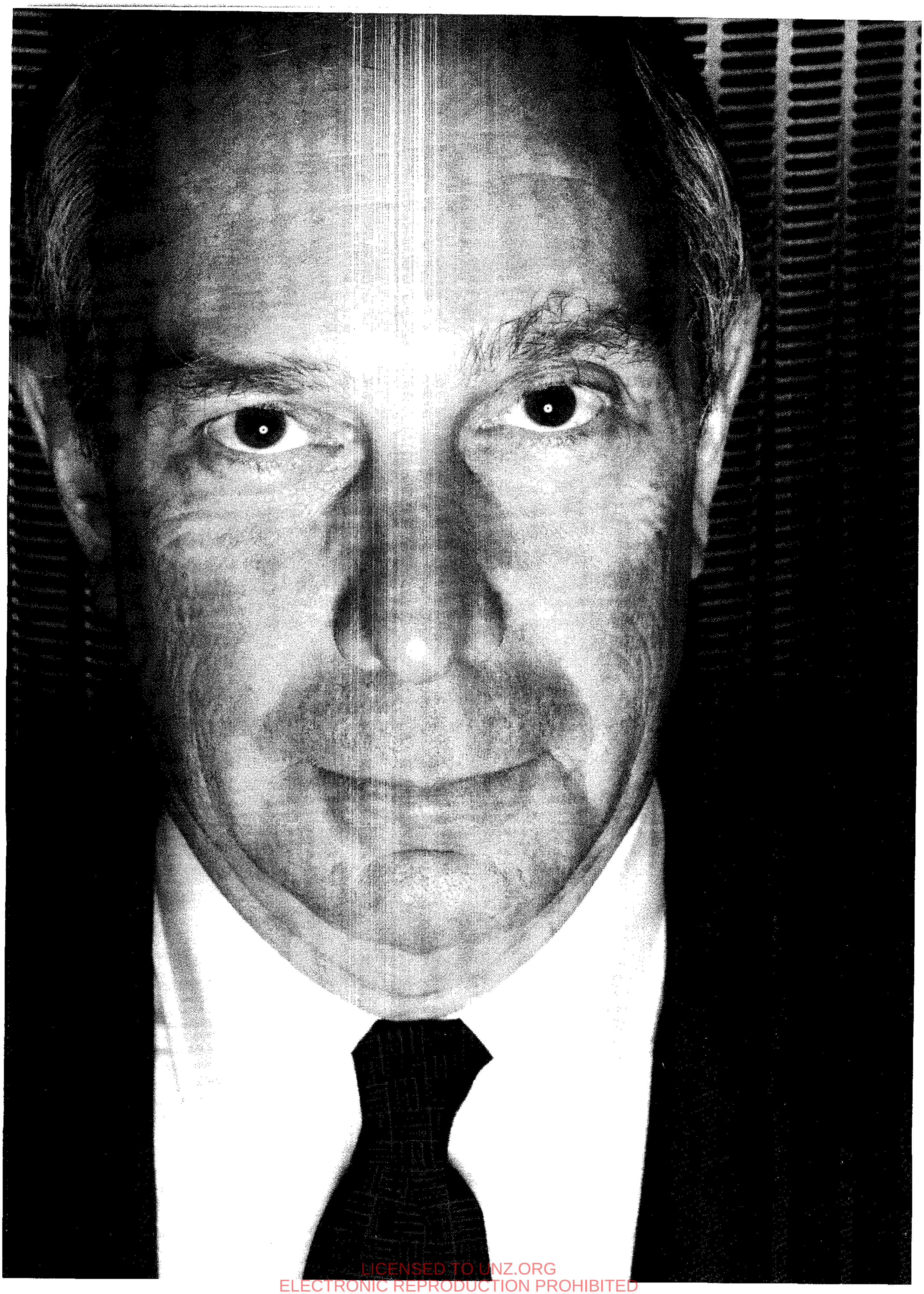
DOES RUNNING A $5 BILLION FINANCIAL-MEDIA COMPANY PREPARE YOU FOR BEING THE MAYOR OF NEW YORK? MICHAEL BLOOMBERG THINKS SO. AND HE'S ABOUT TO PUT HIS MONEY WHERE HIS MOUTH IS.

BY MERYL GORDON



Photograph by Harry Borden/IPG/Matrix.

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG, IN WORN JEANS, T-SHIRT, and sneakers, is perched on a ladder at a Brooklyn school auditorium, painting a wall yellow. A frequent volunteer, he's stretching to get his roller into a corner, but his mind is on his chances in this year's mayoral race. Bloomberg thinks the fact that he's rich ought to be a huge asset: It means he can't be bought by special-interest groups. "Does the press seriously think that anybody who gives money to a candidate wants nothing?" he says. "No! Why don't they say so? If some Democrat beats me by five votes, every single bloc in the whole city will say, 'I got you elected.' It'll be impossible to govern." On a roll, he starts in on the Democrats running for mayor, his voice dripping with contempt: "Let's get serious here. What skills does the public advocate or the comptroller or the Speaker of the City Council have to run the city? There's absolutely nothing I can think of that they have done. Maybe they have a better knowledge of details of programs than I do, which is useful, but that's what you have your staff for!" • This divorced billionaire with an Upper East Side townhouse, an art-filled London home, a house in Bermuda, a weekend place in Westchester, a private plane, and a company helicopter he flies himself thinks *he* should be the next mayor of New York. And though it's hard to imagine a man who has a box at Ascot and is driven around town in a chauffeured gray Cadillac Fleetwood working the kielbasa circuit, he insists he's looking forward to visiting senior-citizen centers in the Bronx and shaking hands on the Staten Island ferry. Ask him if he ever rides the subway, and he reaches for his wallet and triumphantly pulls out a MetroCard. Michael Bloomberg, regular guy? "I like meeting people," he says. "I *love* people. Although I'm sure if I run, by the end of the summer, I'll say I miss the old days, when I could play golf on the weekend." • Bloomberg's quest to be the first billionaire ever to run an American city is a civics lesson in how the rich do things differently. Nearly twenty years ago, he created the



Bloomberg financial-data terminal, which now sits on the desk of nearly every serious financial player on Wall Street and around the world. After expanding his numbers-crunching business into a multi-billion-dollar TV, radio, and print empire thought to be worth more than $5 billion (it's privately held, and Bloomberg owns approximately three quarters of it), he began thinking about his legacy and putting even more of his money to public use, giving over $300 million to charity in the past five years—$100 million alone to his alma mater, Johns Hopkins University. He serves on prestigious boards, like those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Lincoln Center, but now that's not enough. "Do you want to relax and have a great life or devote yourself to helping others?" he says. "Either you believe you can change the world, or you don't."

"I LIKE HIS COCKY STYLE," SAYS TOM BROKAW, "BUT I'M NOT SURE WHY HE WANTS TO DO THIS. IT'S GOING TO BE MUCH HARDER THAN HE BELIEVES."

He has his heart set on public office, and if he runs—and it is almost certain that he will—he will finance his campaign himself. Bloomberg refuses to say how much he'll spend, but the numbers that have been floating around go as high as $30 million. That's *too* high, he says. "At some point, you start to look obscene. There's a limited amount of ad time you can buy. It becomes dysfunctional; you annoy people with ads." Pressed further, he brings up the Kennedy family: "When Joe Kennedy was asked how much he spent to get JFK elected, he said, 'I hope not a dime more than I had to.' " Bloomberg insists the public should be *happy* he's spending his own bucks. "As for the other candidates, I can't help it if your problem is that you can't afford to do it yourself."

And New Yorkers should rejoice in his entry into the mayoral race, if only for the sheer entertainment value of his cheerfully outrageous comments. Ask him if he's ever smoked a joint in the past, and he replies, "You bet I did, and I enjoyed it." He's also more than happy to joke about his single-rich-guy dating status: "Annette de la Renta and Jayne Wrightsman see me as their boy toy; they love to fix me up with their friends." This is not a man used to editing himself for public consumption.

He's charming and open one day, arrogant and thin-skinned the next. He prefers to be interviewed on the move, in the car, walking down a school hallway, dashing up a flight of hotel steps, as if journalism were an aerobic sport. He has a low tolerance for questions he deems unworthy. When I asked him why—in addition to splashing his name on his TV network, his radio stations, and the computer-data terminals that made him rich—he monograms his shirts, he stared at me for a moment and then deadpanned, "I've never thought about that particular piece of egotism before. I'm so embarrassed and ashamed, I think I'll go shoot myself."

Bloomberg is not used to having his motives questioned. Sitting in his fifteenth-floor Park Avenue offices one morning, he brings up a three-month-old newspaper article that seemed to challenge his reasons for delivering holiday meals to the poor. "The nerve," he says. "It still bothers me. Some reporter said, 'Oh, you're giving out free meals because you're running.' Where the hell have they been all the years we've been giving out free meals and trying to get press so that other people will kick in and help? Not everything is done for nefarious reasons, and the press can't understand that."

What seems a little weird is that he talks about the press as if reporters were an alien breed, an odd position for someone whose desk is in the corner of his own 24-hour TV newsroom. But Bloomberg's background isn't journalism; he launched his news-gathering arm only to add value to the Bloomberg financial-data terminal.

In the business community, Bloomberg's prominent friends insist that his candor, can-do charitable activism, and CEO experience will serve him well in government. "Mike is smart, he's driven, and I've told him he can count on me," says John Rosenwald, vice-chairman of Bear Stearns, who speaks with awe of Bloomberg's business acumen. Investment banker Steven Rattner, a major Democratic fund-raiser, says he's not troubled that Bloomberg has recently switched his party affiliation to the GOP, saying, "Mike's a friend, and if he runs, I couldn't give my support to anyone else." James Wolfensohn, the president of the World Bank, has known Bloomberg for more than 25 years, dating back to the days when both worked at Salomon Brothers. "What's endearing about Michael is that he's so straightforward," says Wolfensohn. "I think he'd make a damn good mayor."

Still, some of Bloomberg's friends, especially his media pals, are baffled by his decision to jump into the mayoral race. "I like his cocky style," says Tom Brokaw, "but I'm not sure why he wants to do this. It's not just all hubris; it's a sense of public service. But I think it's going to be so much harder than he believes it is." Barbara Walters, an occasional dinner date of the billionaire, gushes about his philanthropic largesse and adds, "I have always teased that if I could meet Michael ten years older"—he's 59, she's 69—"this would be the man I'd run off with." ("When Barbara needs a walker," Bloomberg jokes, "she calls me.") Yet as much as she admires Bloomberg, Walters wonders how he'll react to the brutal public scrutiny of a political campaign. "He's never had anyone pushing and probing into his life," she says. "That's not easy."

For now, though, he is enjoying all the attention, especially the strangers who recognize him on the street and call out, "Mr. Mayor! Mr. Mayor!"

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG MAY BE the best-connected man in New York. He knows everyone. Watch him in his Paul Stuart tuxedo, red bow tie, and black tasseled loafers as he walks through a room at a Park Avenue social event—the Citizens Committee for New York City awards at the Waldorf two months ago, for example. He is mobbed from the moment he enters the room. Arnold Scaasi wants a handshake; Ruth Messinger whispers in his ear; Kofi Annan poses with him for a photo op. Stepping to the podium to accept the Brooke Astor Award for Philanthropy, Bloomberg, the son of a bookkeeper from Medford, Massachusetts, can't resist making a teasing reference to his modest Jewish heritage compared with the high Wasp quotient of the crowd, pointing to the socially connected Schuyler Chapin and saying, "Only

someone named Chapin, not Bloomberg, could wear a green dinner jacket."

Bloomberg hasn't brought a date, and he has been unattached since breaking up with his girlfriend of several years, Mary Jane Salk, a writer and the widow of noted child psychologist Lee Salk. "He has been discovered socially in the past year," says Barbara Walters. "He's straight, intelligent, and attractive." These days, however, he seems unwilling to bring even casual dates to public events for fear of subjecting the women to untoward press scrutiny. Bloomberg was divorced in 1993 from Sue Brown, an Englishwoman who briefly worked as a secretary in Salomon Brothers' London office; he has two daughters, Emma, a senior at Princeton, and Georgina, a high-school senior and an avid horsewoman who competes on the show circuit. Dubbed the "anti-bimbo billionaire" by the New York *Post* for gallantly dating women over 50, he insists that he's got no problem with the older-man–younger-women thing; it's just that "I have more in common with women who are roughly my age." By all accounts, he seems to make a point of staying on good terms with the women in his life. "He's a great friend," says Christy Ferer, a now-married TV reporter who dated him in the mid-nineties. "He's fun, he's easy company. He's the Horatio Alger of Park Avenue."

He seems genuinely thrilled to be treated as a serious mover and shaker in New York. "I still pinch myself," he says without a hint of his usual sarcasm. "I'm amazed to be in these rooms. When I went to Harvard Business School, I was excited just to meet the *sons* of famous men." Now everyone wants to meet *him*, which is sweet revenge for a man fired twenty years ago from Salomon Brothers. Bloomberg-mania reached its peak in early March on the night of the Inner Circle dinner at the Hilton, where his table, which he shared with Democratic all-star guests like Ed Koch, Charlie Rangel, and Carl McCall, was so surrounded by journalists and well-wishers that the waiters had trouble getting through to clear the plates. After Rudy Giuliani's annual cross-dressing appearance onstage in stockings and heels, Bloomberg boasted that he had no qualms about filling the mayor's shoes: "I have great legs."

Class act: Bloomberg doing volunteer painting work at a Brooklyn school, speaking with students, and reading in a classroom.

CONVINCED THAT BLOOMBERG IS THEIR BEST hope to retain New York City as GOP territory, Governor Pataki, state GOP chairman Alexander Treadwell, and State Senate majority leader Joe Bruno have publicly been falling over one another in recent weeks to embrace Bloomberg's self-financed candidacy, even though the billionaire was a staunch Democrat until re-registering as a Republican last fall. "I think Michael would be an excellent mayor and a tremendous candidate," says Pataki, insisting that Bloomberg's late-in-life conversion doesn't trouble him. "Ronald Reagan was a Democrat, too. It doesn't matter what you were or who you voted for twenty years ago." (Twenty years ago? Bloomberg was donating money to Democratic candidates just last year.)

Bloomberg freely admits that he changed his registration merely to avoid the already-crowded Democratic primary. "I knew I couldn't do it as a Democrat," he says. "The party always protects its officeholders, and an outsider can't come in as a challenger." Bloomberg expects to campaign on the traditional Democratic side of issues: He's pro-choice, pro-gun-control, and, to a limited extent, anti-death-penalty. "I have no moral problems with the death penalty," he explains, "but I'm against it for practical reasons, because you cannot guarantee the state won't make a mistake." He wants to maintain the Rudy legacy of safer streets but would emphasize better community relations and a less-trigger-happy, more racially tolerant police force. "You're not going to find much difference between any of the other four and me," he says.

His message to the city's Democratic voters, who outnumber Republicans five to one, seems to be: If you could vote twice for Rudy, a real Republican, it'll be even less of a stretch to vote for me, a pseudo-Republican. "I like Mike, he's a friend, but I don't think it's doable," says state comptroller Carl McCall, who has endorsed Bronx borough president Fernando Ferrer for mayor. Consultant Hank Sheinkopf tried to talk Bloomberg out of changing parties and is working now for Mark Green. He gives a hint of the campaign to come when he says of the media mogul's GOP reincarnation: "It makes it sound like he has no principles."

Bloomberg, who recently stepped down as chairman of his company (though he retains the CEO title), has been preparing for the race by boning up on city policy in his own unique way: He's been visiting many of the local do-good projects—a drug-treatment program, a home for the mentally ill—that he's written checks to in the past. ("It gives me access," he says.) He commissioned Ester Fuchs, director of Columbia University's Center for Urban Research and Policy, to

Photographs: clockwise from left: Stephanie Berger; Spencer Platt/Newsmakers/Liaison; Courtesy Bloomberg.

prepare an 1,800-page primer for him on local issues, from education to police to housing. "He doesn't assume he has all the answers and knows everything," she says. "He's trying to learn."

Bloomberg is convinced he's got what it takes to connect with the proverbial housewife in Queens. He's always besieged by people who want something—a job, advice, money to invest in their companies, a charitable donation—and his style is to listen patiently, an interested smile on his face. His pockets are usually full of business cards pressed into his hand by importunate strangers. "You *have* to listen," he told me at a Washington reception just after being cornered at the buffet table at midnight by a man eager to talk up his satellite company. "You never know. And I make sure everyone gets a response. People are so surprised and grateful, even if the answer is no."

Bloomberg travels with a posse of staff people—press rep Christine Taylor, philanthropic exec and Koch alumna Patti Harris, and Washington government-affairs rep Kevin Sheekey, a former Moynihan aide—but their role is to hang on the fringes until summoned rather than to run interference for the boss.

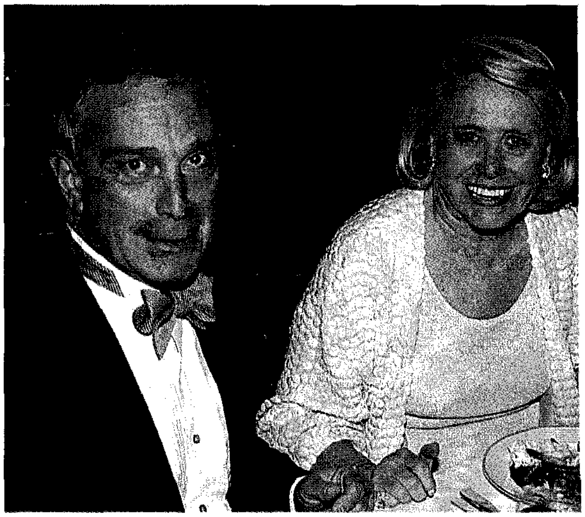
His company was built on a near-maniacal obsession with customer service: Each of his 156,000 data terminals worldwide sports a top-of-the-screen message urging clients to personally zap him an e-mail if they have a problem. Bloomberg is already kicking around the idea—if he becomes mayor—of establishing the equivalent of a 911 number for citizen complaints, which people can call to report a pothole or a garbage problem and have their calls directed to the right agency, with a 24-hour response time.

"New York has never had a CEO run the city," says Harold Doley, a black stockbroker and former Reagan-administration ambassador, who, as an informal campaign adviser, has arranged for Bloomberg to meet the Reverend Al Sharpton and other black city leaders. "As the stock market declines and city revenues taper off, Mike as a businessman is the ideal leader."

IN "CITIZEN MIKE"—AN ORSON WELLES-style video spoof made for a 1999 testimonial dinner and narrated by the likes of Peter Jennings, Donald Trump, Liz Smith, Beverly Sills, Christo, and Percy Sutton—the life story of Bloomberg, from lowly number cruncher to William Randolph Hearst–like media maven, is treated with amusing irreverence. The omniscient narrator intones at the *Citizen Kane*–style beginning, as a baby picture flits by on the screen, "The momentous arrival of Michael Rubens Bloomberg goes somewhat unnoticed on that fatal natal day. He will make them pay for that."

Bloomberg's father was a bookkeeper for a dairy who died of heart failure in 1963. After his death, Bloomberg's mother, Charlotte, went to work as a secretary. His parents were never all that consumed with material success, he says, adding that his 92-year-old mother has refused his offers to treat her to a nicer home, preferring to stay in the family split-level in Medford that Bloomberg's parents bought for $11,000 some 50 years ago. Mom, in fact, is still so independent that when she uses a car service at night that's billed to her son, "she sends me a check!" the billionaire says with incredulity. "It drives me crazy."

At Johns Hopkins, Bloomberg was the first Jew to join the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. John Galotto, a Maryland internist who was one of Bloomberg's frat brothers and remains a close friend, recalls, "When we were rushing him, I looked into his closet and there was this chart his mother had made for him of what shirt to wear with what suit." Bloomberg, an engineering major, became president of the fraternity, even while holding a job as a parking attendant at the faculty club to pay his living expenses. "I wasn't smart enough for a scholarship," says Bloomberg, who took out college loans. Galotto adds that Bloomberg was driven to succeed: "He wanted people to think that everything came naturally, but you'd see him at 2 A.M., dragging 50 feet of paper home from the computer lab." (These days, Bloomberg the student is studying Spanish for the campaign trail, although he ruefully admits that languages aren't his forte.)



Bachelor parties: Clockwise from top, Bloomberg with Liz Smith, with Mary Jane Salk, and with Barbara Walters.

Accepted at Harvard Business School despite mediocre grades—"I bet they're thanking their lucky stars that some admissions officer let me in," says Bloomberg, alluding to his hefty donations to his alma mater—he expected to go to Vietnam upon graduation but was turned down after his Army physical revealed that he had flat feet. So instead he moved to New York in 1966 and joined Salomon Brothers as a trainee.

What Bloomberg discovered at Salomon Brothers was that he loved to sell,

Photographs: clockwise from top, Patrick McMullan (2); Walter Weissman/Globe Photos.

to close the big deal, to hustle stocks and bonds to institutional customers, to feel the adrenaline rush on the trading floor. America has always had a weakness for really talented salesmen. And though he may be a novice politician, he's been prepping for decades for the handshake-and-a-smile rigors of a campaign in which the only difference, this time, is that the product will be himself. "A good salesman never gets discouraged," says Bloomberg, who doesn't seem to have ever had a Willy Loman day in his life. "Sometimes people say no," he says, "but what's great about sales is that you know whether or not you're connecting and convincing people."

In 1979, after a power struggle, he was transferred away from Salomon's trading area to a dead-end job upgrading and running the firm's computer operations. Two years later, when Salomon Brothers merged with the Phibro Corp., Bloomberg was among a number of partners who were let go; but he received $10 million as his share of the sale. "What's amazing, in hindsight, is that the firm let him go because they saw no value in what he was doing," says Richard Grand-Jean, a former Salomon partner who now runs his own firm. Bloomberg's 1997 autobiography, *Bloomberg by Bloomberg*, gives a breathless account of what happened next: how he started his own company and built the ultimate futuristic financial-data machine, with every possible stock and bond and commodities price, and computer software to twist and turn the numbers into five-year charts and comparative returns. With a mere idea of a product and the best sales pitch of his life, Bloomberg won Merrill Lynch as his first customer and major investor (the firm still owns 20 percent of his company). In twenty years, he's created a financial colossus: Bloomberg's 156,000 terminals lease at a cost of $1,650 a month for one and $1,295 each for two or more; that adds up to the tidy sum of more than $2.5 billion a year.

He launched his news division in 1990 to provide breaking financial stories, the kind that move markets, to his traders on their terminals. Later, he added 24-hour radio and TV operations; neither makes a profit, but Bloomberg uses them to boost the company's name recognition.

Bloomberg professes to be a bit embarrassed that people perceive him as an egomaniac for putting his name on the machines and the news operation. "You want a name you can remember," he says, explaining that the terminals were first called Market Master, but when that trademark proved invalid, he switched to the name his customers already unofficially used. "Bloomberg is a name you can remember."

ON ELECTION NIGHT IN NEW YORK this past fall, Elaine's was so crowded that it was almost impossible to move without crashing into someone famous (*Sorry, Uma Thurman! Whoops, my fault, Charlie Rose. Barry Diller and Diane Von Furstenberg, can I squeeze by?*), and even Bloomberg, a co-host of the party, looked overwhelmed. Harvey Weinstein, another co-host, was genial, albeit succinct, when asked about Bloomberg, pronouncing, "He's a good guy. Write something nice."

Among reporters and politicians, Bloomberg's name has recently become synonymous with fabulous A-list parties. He dazzled the Washington elites last year with a post-prom after-party that followed the White House Correspondents' Dinner. There were mounds of caviar, a table laden with fresh sushi, and an army of security to keep out unwanted crashers. An invitation to this year's party is as coveted as a George W. nickname; even last Wednesday's episode of *The West Wing* had a joke about whether President Bartlet could get into the "Bloomberg party."

Last summer, hedging his political bets, Bloomberg not only gave a gala at the Republican convention in Philadelphia honoring George Pataki (Colin Powell stopped by) but also threw a Los Angeles bash for the Democratic convention's New York delegation. A semi-nude model, her breasts artfully covered with shells, perched over Spago's raw-seafood bar; movie stars mingled with Tom Brokaw, Charlie Rangel, Chuck Schumer, and ink-stained wretches from most of the New York newspapers. Mark Green, working the room, went over to thank his host and rival, then wandered by where I was sitting with other journalists. "I just told Mike, 'If you don't win,' " Green quipped, " 'will you at least cater my inauguration?' "

Back in New York, Bloomberg frequently hosts small dinners at his five-story limestone townhouse in the East Seventies, which is handsomely decorated with a Fragonard sketch, eighteenth-century landscapes, and antique English furniture. What surprises guests is the eclectic array of New Yorkers invited and the often down-home fare: meat loaf and mashed potatoes, fried chicken, even burgers. "People love it," he says. "Everyone else is serving the same piece of salmon." A recent dinner-party guest list included Steve Forbes, a passel of Wall Street types, his daughter's riding instructor, and pollster Doug Schoen. "He loves putting people together," says Barbara Walters. "I sat between the basketball commissioner and someone from the Museum of Modern Art last time."

One signature touch at Bloomberg's dinners is unusual place cards: big vanilla cookies, baked with the guest's name and a personalized image (a tennis racquet; an alma mater crest), preferably the more obscure the better. When Harold Varmus, the Nobel Prize winner who now runs Memorial Sloan-Kettering, and his wife, Constance Casey, went to dinner at Bloomberg's earlier this year, Casey was astonished to see her terrier, Isabel, on her cookie. "My dog wasn't mentioned in any of the profiles of Harold," she says. "I still don't know how they found out." Bloomberg, with a grin, refuses to reveal his sources.

What he doesn't have these days is a steady girlfriend (or if he does, he's really, truly discreet). Late one night, Bloomberg admits that he's surprised to still be single. He presumed he'd remarry within a few years of his divorce and has come close once or twice; no, he won't name names, but he did have a close relationship with Broadway star Ann Reinking, and for years his friends were expecting him to tie the knot with Mary Jane Salk. Since breaking up with Salk, Bloomberg has enjoyed the perks of single-billionaire-hood, dating actress Marisa Berenson and last summer taking diva Diana Ross to dinner at BondSt, a date memorialized forever by the tabloids. "I was furious at that restaurant for calling the papers," he says. "I've never gone back there again."

IN THE POLITICAL ARENA, WITHOUT ANY record as an officeholder, he will be judged and defined in the upcoming campaign by his history as a CEO and, he hopes, by his commitment to charity. With 7,000 employees around the globe,

"HE'S A BAWDY GUY, VERY FUNNY, BUT YOU DON'T TAKE 75 PERCENT OF WHAT HE SAYS SERIOUSLY; HE JUST LOVES TO GET A RISE OUT OF WOMEN."

he has developed a corporate culture with its own decided quirks: no titles, no private offices or executive dining rooms, endless free junk food and healthy snacks at the cheerful food court, aquariums as handsome wall dividers, well-paid workers (a *Daily News* reporter gleefully recalled that he tripled his salary when he joined the company last spring), and a no-exit clause: Anyone who quits to take another job cannot come back, ever.

After presiding over a well-paid high-tech white-collar staff with glossy résumés, he would certainly find it radically different to tackle an entrenched civil-service bureaucracy resistant to change. But he insists that some of his company innovations would be worth trying at Gracie Mansion, such as rotating key managers for a few weeks at a time so they can learn how the other half lives. He would also try to promote from within, as a morale-building exercise. "All of our top management has been grown from within the company," he says. "If people think they can move up, they work harder."

At the sleek black Bloomberg building on Park Avenue and 59th Street, the two policies raising the most eyebrows these days are the intense security (all staff members have to use an electronic badge to enter, and a computer logs their ins and outs) and a software program that blocks profanity and epithets from internal e-mail for staff and messages sent by clients via the Bloomberg terminals. Bloomberg's voice rises—he's almost squeaking—when I ask him about this policy. "It's our system, and I have a right to limit what goes over it," he says. "I don't think it's in our clients' interest to allow abusive language in a business context." Calming down, he then tells me that it's quite easy to subvert the program; all you have to do is put stars or spaces between the letters of swear words. When I ask if Bloomberg ever swears himself, he bursts out laughing: "Me, the man the *Wall Street Journal* referred to as 'the profane Michael Bloomberg,' to my mother's everlasting mortification?"

He admits he's tried to clean up his act in recent years—he limits himself in front of me to the abbreviated "NFW," as in "no fucking way"—but friends and colleagues acknowledge that he can be a salty guy, a true product of Wall Street's raunchy trading-desk culture. "He's a really bawdy guy, very funny," says a woman friend, "but you don't take 75 percent of what he says seriously; he just loves to get a rise out of women." Female staff report that he has a good record for promoting women and minorities and has never been accused of hitting on his employees, but he has made flip sexual comments that women have found offensive.

Last month, the *Daily News* rehashed the details of a 1997 sexual-harassment complaint against Bloomberg by former sales executive Sekiko Garrison, who charged that when she told him she was pregnant, he responded, "Kill it." He has denied, under oath, that he made this and other crude statements, but nonetheless he settled the case last spring, for a sum said to be less than six figures. The lawsuit wasn't news per se—it had been mentioned before in the press—but the specific charges taken from the original legal papers made headlines. "Mike expected people would dredge it up," says Bill Cunningham, a recently hired senior political adviser to Bloomberg, "which is why he took and passed a lie-detector test."

Bloomberg chooses his words carefully when he's asked about the sexual-harassment lawsuit and the press feeding frenzy after the *Daily News* story. "It was very hurtful," he says. "I am 100 percent convinced that this company and myself acted honorably." Why settle, then? "I settled it because it would have dragged on and on and been disruptive for me and a lot of people who would have been brought in [for depositions]." His expanding team of political advisers fervently hope the story will be old news by the time Bloomberg is expected to announce in June. "If it had to come out," one of them says, "it's much better to do it now rather than a week before the election."

Pol numbers: With Andrew Stein and Ed Koch; with a Bloomberg machine; with Colin Powell and George Pataki at the GOP convention.

BLOOMBERG'S MANAGEMENT AND financial expertise, as New York teeters on the verge of recession, is likely to be a key selling point in his campaign. His aides hope that Mark Green, now the front-runner in all major polls, will be the Democratic nominee, since they see him as the most liberal of the four, allowing Bloomberg to position himself instead as the pragmatic businessman willing to take on the unions with a slew of difficult contract negotiations ahead.

Ray Harding, the head of the state Liberal Party, known for its devotion to patronage politics, supported Giuliani and has met with Bloomberg twice. "He's obviously a man of great ability," Harding says of Bloomberg.

Harding's party will conduct face-to-

Photographs: clockwise from top, Patrick McMullan; Eric Freeland/Matrix; John Harrington.

face auditions of all mayoral candidates on April 28 and May 5. "Sure, I'll talk to them," says Bloomberg. And what will he do if pressed to make his candidacy official sooner in order to win the endorsement? "That would force the issue to make a decision earlier," he admits.

As for a possible Republican primary, Bloomberg's advisers are hoping there won't be one, that state GOP officials will pressure Herman Badillo not to run. The media mogul would likely win, but he'd be forced to move to the right in a contested GOP race, alienating Democrats in November.

He's hired a bipartisan team of advisers, including the legendary David Garth, who helped elect John Lindsay, Ed Koch, and Rudy Giuliani; pollster Doug Schoen, who helped engineer Jon Corzine's $60 million New Jersey Senate win; Maureen Connelly, a respected former Koch aide; and Cunningham, a press-savvy former Moynihan aide. Carl McCall, who's running for governor with an infinitely smaller budget and brain trust, jokes, "Mike is a political consultant's dream."

So how would Mayor Mike govern New York's concrete jungle? On the public-school system: "I would have backed Edison 100 percent, because these are the five worst schools in the city and you have to try something new. Vouchers, charter schools, I'm in favor of trying them all." On the police: "I'm very much in favor of the Civilian Review Board. The police are doing a good job, crime is way down. But the big problem is the black and Latino communities feel the police are out of control; there's a bit of truth in that in a number of cases." On gridlocked New York traffic: "A toll system that makes it more expensive for trucks to deliver during the day would be easy and enforceable." He also would coerce Con Ed and cable and phone companies into informing the city before digging up streets, so the police could direct traffic accordingly. "The mayor ought to be able to sit down with these organizations and say, 'If you want to have a problem, you'll have a problem with me, baby.' "

There is one softball question, however, that he dodges: Asked whether he wants the Yankees to stay in the Bronx, he stares at me and says, "You'll notice I'm not answering." Responding to a litany of issues that reporters have raised to date, he says he will release his tax returns if he runs, but in a limited way: listing the sources of income but not his total yearly take or his specific charitable gifts. He takes umbrage at the suggestion that inquiring minds want to know: "It's nobody's business." He also says he hasn't decided whether to decline a $14 million city tax break for a new corporate headquarters to be built on the Lexington Avenue site of the old Alexander's. "If I walk away from the money for personal reasons, I have an obligation to my shareholders, and I'll have to write a check."

AT SOUTH BRONX HIGH SCHOOL one recent afternoon, Bloomberg got a cram course in glacial geology—more specifically, the slow-moving pace of city budgets. Principal Eduardo Genao complained that he had been trying for seven years to get funding to replace the ancient windows. "I know it's the city's responsibility, but if they can't help, can't you get the community involved?" asked Bloomberg, who has donated money to a charitable organization that is fixing up the school's sports field. "There must be carpenters in the neighborhood." Replied the principal, "The community is pretty apathetic." Afterward, in his car, driving past trash-strewn lots, Bloomberg seemed genuinely disturbed by the why-bother despair of this poor neighborhood. He's used to being a get-it-done-yesterday, write-the-check mogul. "There's got to be a way," he mused aloud, "to get people involved in something that would help their own children."

To his credit, Bloomberg has given pots of money to support education, from teacher training to arts in the schools to scholarships to literacy programs. In fact, he's supported almost every major city charity—Citymeals-on-Wheels, shelters for battered women, Gay Men's Health Crisis—and most of his commitments are long-standing. Bloomberg, who usually flies his helicopter every Monday to Baltimore, where he's chairman of the board of Johns Hopkins, serves on twenty different boards, including those of the Jewish Museum, the Old Vic Theatre, and the Serpentine Gallery in London. As a champion of the arts, he is the least likely person to go on one of Rudy's headline-making campaigns against so-called obscene art; Bloomberg calls the decency panel "ridiculous." (Friends tease that Bloomberg routinely falls asleep at operas and plays.) Should Bloomberg run, his campaign will undoubtedly stress the big bucks he's given away as evidence of his civic commitment.

"Mike's been the rock of Gibraltar for us," says Rusty Staub, the former Mets outfielder who chairs the New York Police and Fire Widows' and Children's benefit fund, to which Bloomberg's been a donor since 1988. "He didn't get involved with us for political reasons, but if being involved with us can help him now, God bless him." However you slice it, the money makes him a formidable opponent. "He can buy name recognition," says Charlie Rangel, who says he likes Bloomberg but could not back him as a GOP candidate. "You blitz people with ads, and by the time you're done, they'll think they were raised with you and went to school with you."

Even before his declaration, Bloomberg's billions have become a major issue in the mayoral race, since he has indicated that he will not abide by the city's voluntary campaign-finance system, which allows candidates to spend $5.2 million in the primary and $5.2 million in the general election. The New York *Times* has already editorialized against Bloomberg on this score, calling his likely decision "a major political error" and leading most observers to assume that he's killed his chance of getting the paper's prestigious endorsement. (The *Times* backed Republican Bob Franks over the free-spending Jon Corzine in New Jersey for just this reason.)

The last fabulously wealthy media mogul to attempt to become New York's mayor was William Randolph Hearst, who ran in 1905. Bloomberg is now reading *The Chief,* David Nasaw's new biography of Hearst, and he admits that the first thing he turned to was the account of the New York mayoral race. Hearst was one of the richest men of his day, yet he ran effectively as a populist reformer, losing by a mere 3,000 votes. (The election was most likely stolen from him by Tammany Hall.)

If Bloomberg wins in November, he says, he has no interest in using City Hall as a stepping stone to higher office. But then again, he sounded pretty unequivocal in his 1997 autobiography when he claimed he wasn't interested in political office of any kind. So things change. ■

"HE CAN BUY NAME RECOGNITION," SAYS CHARLIE RANGEL. "BLITZ PEOPLE WITH ADS AND THEY'LL THINK THEY WERE RAISED WITH YOU."

THE GOOD DOCTOR College counselor Katherine Cohen in her Lulu de Kwiatkowski-decorated office.

The $28,995 Tutor

Parents appreciate Katherine Cohen's brains and her keen social instincts. Girls appreciate her fashion sense. Boys appreciate her good looks. All this has made her the East Side's hottest independent college counselor. But it still may not get your kid into Yale.

By Ralph Gardner Jr.

TAKING THE SATS FOR THE FIRST TIME—OR even the third time, as many driven teenagers in search of the perfect 1,600 do these days—can constitute something akin to a near-death experience. But for Anna, a senior at one of the city's top private schools, it was even worse than that.

"Everything completely went wrong that day," says Susan, Anna's mom, who has been involved, perhaps too involved, in her daughter's quest to gain admission to a brand-name college. "It was a disaster, a horrible situation."

The proctor didn't show up until minutes before the 9 A.M. start of the test, Susan says, interrupted Anna during the exam to register her, shortchanged her time on several sections (Anna knows this because she was wearing a stopwatch at the suggestion of one of her SAT tutors), and denied the teenager an entirely permissible bathroom break. Furthermore, a street festival was getting under way outside the testing center that fateful Saturday morning, further adding to Anna's woes.

"When the test was over, she was hysterical, crying," recalls her mother. "Everything that could go wrong did go wrong. They study, we pay for tutors, they're nervous wrecks."

While Susan may have overreacted somewhat—she shot off a five-page, single-spaced, handwritten letter to the Educational Testing Service, called the organization's president, and thought of suing ("I could have had the proctor on trial," she explains, "but my husband refused to let me do it")—she had reason to be upset.

Beyond the $20,000-plus a year she spends on Anna's tuition, she has invested thousands more on separate math and verbal SAT tutors—"I believe in specialists," Susan pronounces, sitting in the library of her sun-splashed Park Avenue apartment on a recent morning. However, the priciest member of her daughter's college-admissions SWAT team undoubtedly is Dr. Katherine Cohen, the founder of IvyWise, a college-consulting firm, and possibly New York's youngest, probably its most handsomely compensated, and without a doubt its hippest independent college-guidance counselor.

"Katherine is very cool," Anna attests. "She's got great fashion sense. Her apartment is really cool. She started her own business. She cares about her clients. And she looks great in a bikini."

"Guys lust after her and the girls want to be like her," observes John Katzman, the head of Princeton Review and a friend of Cohen's. "The kids don't see a straight line between where they are right now and older academic guys," he adds. "It's easier to see the straight line to Kat. She's only a couple of years older and much less parental."

Brandon Gross, a former client of Cohen's and a sophomore at Brown University, denies that his interest in his tutor extended beyond having her help him craft a crack personal essay, though he admits she caused quite a stir at his birthday party. "My friends couldn't believe

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GREG MILLER

she was my college counselor," he says.

Kat, as her awestruck protégés call her, is part of a prosperous new breed of private counselors who are helping the children of the rich attain their birthright of getting accepted to the Ivy League college of their choice despite the ever-mounting odds against them. Cohen's "platinum package," which includes 24 sessions and an hour of phone time per week, typically spread over junior and senior year, costs $28,995. "I sold out already," she tells me, referring to next year's crop of high-school seniors. "Everybody wanted a platinum package this year. I've got to clone myself."

That's not to say that worthy families need fear attacking the psychologically traumatizing college-application season alone or, God forbid, exclusively under the direction of their kid's sleep-deprived in-school guidance counselor. Cohen, who, at 33, has the sort of academic credentials (Brown and Yale), kick-ass work ethic, and nicely toned physique that inspire confidence in the overdecorated sanctum sanctorums of the Upper East Side, has several lesser payment plans still available.

"Manhattan families are among the most parochial in the U.S. They think, 'Because my daughter is doing well at Brearley, she must be one of the very top kids.' It is simply more competitive."

"You can also do an à la carte series if you can't afford a whole package," she says as she sits in her elegantly utilitarian midtown office (she also has one downtown), whose paintings and fabrics are by junior socialite and Cohen friend Lulu de Kwiatkowski. Cohen is referring to her warp-speed college-application-review option. "It takes me about two or three hours, and it's $1,000."

Getting into one of the nation's most selective Ivy League colleges or their equivalent has always been something of a blood sport among ambitious Manhattan families, most of whom apply to the same handful of schools. What's different today is that kids from places like Albuquerque and Tucson, with the encouragement of the colleges, no less, have the temerity to believe they have equal rights to an Ivy League education.

"I'm afraid Manhattan parents are among the most parochial in the United States," sighs Tom Parker, Amherst College's dean of admissions. "It's like a little town in Tennessee in terms of being oblivious to the rest of the country. They sort of think, 'Because my daughter is doing well at Brearley, she must be one of the very top kids in the U.S.' There are lots of bright kids throughout the country. It is simply more competitive."

So competitive, in fact, that last year a Yale admissions officer, by all accounts a winning fellow, told one West Side family that the college could have tossed all its acceptances in the trash and culled a statistically identical and stellar freshman class from the reject pile.

It's as if the schools were being asked to choose between Superman and Batman. A Horace Mann senior who got into Harvard early-action this year touched upon the absurdity of the situation when she tried to describe the difference between a Yale man or woman and one who might make the cut at Harvard.

"The Yale type is very well rounded—an A student who's a varsity athlete," she said. "A Harvard student is someone Harvard thinks is going to be famous someday."

Harvard's director of admissions, Marlyn McGrath Lewis, admits as much. "In order to make a final decision to admit," she says, "we have to identify for ourselves some unusual characteristic that will set the candidate apart in our pool—either a very unusual academic accomplishment, a contribution to the humanities or writing, a great performer or composer, or someone who can help one of our 41 intercollegiate teams. Once we're as sure as we can be of the academics—which highly developed, one might say overdeveloped, talents set the person apart as someone we'd want to bring here?"

In order to enhance their chances of achieving glory (it goes without saying that their kids' SATs and GPAs are already in the steroid-enhanced range), families are chasing their dream by employing that most American of strategies for success—marketing.

"I hear families use the word *packaging*," says the mother of a senior at one of the city's most competitive girls' schools. " 'We're packaging our daughter.' The hair stands up on the back of your neck. They made an investment, and they want a return."

That's where Katherine Cohen comes in—though she denies that she regards her clients as product she's trying to move off the grocer's shelf and into the shopping cart of Princeton's dean of admissions. "What I call it is making sure their authentic voice comes through in the essays and the interviews," she says. "It depends on how you define packaging. You're trying to represent yourself as a student on your best day."

Dr. Cohen—her title deriving from a degree not in medicine, the law, or even education but in Latin American literature—typically starts seeing clients in eleventh grade, though she has students as young as eighth grade, and this year she had one seventh-grader. "You've got some neurotic parents out there," she explains.

At her first meeting with the client, the only one parents are allowed to attend, she's less interested in hearing about the family's Harvard pipe dreams—lowering expectations may be the toughest part of her job—than in discovering what, if anything, engages the child academically, artistically, or socially that can be transformed into something resembling a consuming passion.

"You join the school team," she says by way of jock example. "Maybe you start a sports column or become the sports editor. Maybe in the summer you get an internship at ESPN or with a sports agent.

"The most selective schools are not looking for well-rounded students," she goes on. "They're looking for well-rounded student bodies. Do a few things that you love to do, spend time on them, be committed, do them for four years."

Cohen believes she broke the college-admissions code when she worked for Yale's admissions office as an application reader while studying at the university for her Ph.D. "You think it's such a mystery, but all of a sudden it becomes less mysterious," she remembers. "I understood why they let this guy in over this guy."

The quality the top colleges read between the lines for, the adviser claims, is also the one most susceptible to the conjurer's art—character. "Eighty percent of the applicants are academically qualified," Cohen says. "So the question becomes, 'Who is the person? Who are we admitting?' "

Cohen tries to answer the question as proactively as possible by helping her kids pick their courses and extracurriculars, not to mention the subject of their personal essay, so that their desire when they grow up to, say, be Martin Scorsese or cure Third World hunger or even run the family's hedge fund seems to be a matter of predestination more than one of adolescent hubris.

If nothing else, all the *i*'s are dotted and the *t*'s crossed and the personal essay free of spelling mistakes—Cohen insists she doesn't write her students' essays for them—before they're submitted to passport control in Cambridge, New Haven, or Providence.

"You can't just wing an application and get in; you might have been able to do that twenty years ago if you had the grades and the scores," she says, thinking in particular of the lackadaisical Princeton legacy she got accepted to his dad's alma mater a week after he'd been wait-listed—a feat roughly equivalent to resurrecting the dead.

"I went though the application and said, 'Here are the 25 red flags that need to be explained,' " she remembers. "I said, 'I want you to get your six-foot-eight-inch frame' "—he was a basketball player but apparently not a very good one ("Princeton does look for scholar-athletes," Cohen says)—" 'into the admissions office explaining all the red flags I saw on the application.' He needed to go in there physically. They called him two days later and accepted him."

"She made me realize it's not all about grades," says Nina Lisandrello, a pro bono client of Cohen's who believes she wouldn't have gotten into Tisch's film school last year without the counselor's help. "She said, 'You don't have great grades? Fine. We'll do this portfolio. This is what's going to make you stand out."

Cohen favors personal essays that feature painful self-revelation over exotic locales. Brandon Gross says he probably wouldn't have written about his peripatetic high-school career were it not for Cohen's urging. "I went to three high schools—Brentwood, Phillips Exeter, and Crossroads," he explains. "I just couldn't deal with the L.A. scene. I knew there had to be more out there. She knew from being an admissions officer once that I had to address that."

Nina Lisandrello was raised by a single mother. "I had a lot more responsibility than the average child," she says, sitting at a Starbucks around the corner from NYU on a recent afternoon. "I never really thought of it as a big deal until Katherine made me realize it was and that it was important for colleges to know exactly where I was coming from."

Cohen believes that the growing movement to eliminate the SAT only works to her company's advantage. "If they're not using SATs to evaluate a student, they're going to be looking at everything else—how you spent time over the summer, your essays," she says. "It's going to be less of a numbers game and more emphasis on everything else that makes them who they are as a student."

PERHAPS THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON Cohen conveys to her impressionable young clients is that life isn't a beach (though IvyWise relocates for many weekends throughout the winter to the Breakers in Palm Beach, where Kat's grandmother has a home and several of her clients invariably vacation). Rather, it's a Rolodex.

The guidance counselor isn't above hitting up friends in high places for internships when a teenager's brag sheet could use a little fluffing. When Nina's Tisch application demanded greater evidence that she was a budding Fellini than the fact that she'd started her high school's film club, Kat scored her two internships—one with Doug Liman, the director of such films as *Swingers* and *Go*, and a close friend of Kat's from Brown, and the other with Brett Ratner, the director of *Rush Hour*. "He went to Tisch, and he got me an interview with the dean to look at my portfolio," Nina says of Ratner.

Cohen also garnered an internship for another client, currently a freshman at Brown, when she ran into a television executive she knew in the lobby of the Breakers, introduced the kid, with whom she'd just finished one of her counseling sessions, and thrust his personal essay into the guy's hand.

"I happened to run into her purely by chance at the hotel," recalls the executive, who asked that his name not be revealed. "She said, 'This is one of my kids.' He was in a session and he had his essay out and I've always been fascinated by college essays, largely because mine was so bad. So I read this kid's essay and I thought, 'What an amazing achievement!' I remember quite vividly how he captured the phenomenon of this New York Jewish family driving to the SATs. It was very close to professional. I said, 'Okay.' This kid is going to run the world, and we brought him in and everybody loved having him."

WHILE ALL THIS SOUNDS WONDERFUL, ONE must eventually ask the indelicate question of whether Cohen is worth her astronomical fees. Do her clients stand a better chance of getting into the first-, second-, or even third-choice college than they would if they signed up with one of her more modestly priced competitors or even decided to cast their fate with their school's overworked guidance counselor?

"There's an implicit assumption that she's offering you something you can't get elsewhere at a much cheaper price," contends Adam Robinson, the founder of RocketReview, an SAT-prep course, and Anna's third SAT tutor. He laughingly refers to himself as Anna's "script doctor."

"To me, the really sad thing," he goes on, "is that it feeds on the cynicism not just of parents but also of the students—that they can buy their way into institutions."

Cohen claims that 75 percent of her students—she has about twenty applying to college in any particular year—got into their first-choice colleges in 2000 and that 82 percent got into one of their "reach" schools. "Meaning their profile was not as strong as the incoming middle 50 percent," she says.

Their acceptances included Harvard, Yale, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, and USC, among others. However, this week, she's been pleasantly surprised by acceptances at schools such as Georgetown and Tufts. "Last year, in general, I had more motivated kids," she says, essentially conceding she's not much better than her raw material. "This year, it was much more common to get deferred. It's the most competitive it's ever been."

"IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT THERE IS an industry feeding off the insecurity of these folks," says Amherst's Tom Packer. "I know how good the counselors are at the Brearleys, Chapins, and Horace Manns. These people are as good as they get. To get a private counselor is a joke; it's preposterous. In the profession, we laugh at these things. This is cause for great merriment and hilarity for people who know the business."

Perhaps so. But there's also reason to believe the colleges feel that hired guns such as Cohen give wealthier applicants an unfair advantage. This year, for the first time, Duke University includes this question on its application: "Whose advice did you seek for help with your essay? Was he/she helpful? What help did he/she provide?"

"Sometimes we can tell if a student's presentation has been polished, and sometimes we can't," admits Christoph Guttentag, Duke's director of admissions. "It will be very interesting to see what our question elicits."

Chances are, not much. One mother says she was having dinner with some fellow junior-class parents last spring, the traditional opening bell to the steel-cage college-admissions contest, when another mom announced she'd heard that colleges were going to start asking questions similar to Duke's on their applications.

"I knew this family's daughter had been tutored very early, so I said to her, 'What do you think you do?' And she said, 'You lie.' I thought, 'There it is. You just can't behave well.' "

'GOD FORBID YOU MAKE ANY money doing this," Cohen responds with characteristic fire. "All these educators feel the more of a martyr you are, the better you are—'I made $40,000 last year.' 'Well, I only made $30,000.' An actor makes $20 million for a movie, but God forbid an educator or counselor makes what a lawyer makes.

"These parents treat their kids like subordinates whose job is to get into Harvard. What a New York parent wants is to know that somebody is on the job and it will be fine."

"Can you buy your way into a meritocracy?" Cohen asks rhetorically, summing up the rising discontent over high-priced consultants such as herself at the National Association of College Admissions Counseling conference in Washington, D.C., last fall. Cohen attends every year, making herself known to the deans of admissions at her clients' favorite schools. This year, for the first time, she says, they've started returning her phone calls and listening to her pitch her students. "All these panel members are bemoaning the fact that it's not a level playing field. I said it's never going to be a level playing field."

KATHERINE COHEN, LIKE MOST OF HER clients, appears to have enjoyed the benefits of a playing field tilted in her favor. She grew up in Brentwood; her father, an investment banker, started Bear Stearns's L.A. office, she says, and she attended the prestigious Harvard-Westlake School. Nonetheless, her college-guidance counselor tried to dissuade her from applying to Brown, her first choice.

"I was not the No. 1 student in my class," she remembers. "I had a 4.0, but other kids had higher GPAs than I did. She was really discouraging, and I said, 'Screw it. I'm going to do it on my own.'

"A lot of times, what happens with high-school counselors is they feel very invested in the top 10 percent," she continues. "And I think the middle of the class gets a little bit lost."

There's probably some truth to that. While all school-guidance counselors undoubtedly wish every one of their students well, their job security turns on getting the top of the class into Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and a smattering of other highly selective colleges. "The board of trustees is really involved in this very actively," contends Howard Greene, a veteran independent college adviser and former Princeton admissions officer who sits on several private-school boards. His latest book, written with his son Matthew Greene, is *The Hidden Ivies: Thirty Colleges of Excellence* (HarperCollins). "They want to know, 'Where are our kids applying these days? Why aren't there more prestigious names on the list? What are you doing about it?' The heads of schools are feeling a lot of pressure."

When Cohen's high-school guidance counselor gave her the brush-off, she decided to take matters into her own hands by signing up for the Princeton Review's first Los Angeles SAT-prep course. The year was 1984. "The first time I took them, I got 1,250," she recalls. "Then I took Princeton Review, and they went way up."

WHEN A FAMILY HIRES COhen, it's not getting any guarantee that its kid will get into the college of his, or rather his parents', choice. What the family is getting is someone to serve as a buffer between driven, type-A parents and their stressed-out children, someone who falls somewhere in the domestic hierarchy between the housekeeper and personal trainer on the one hand and the shrink and financial adviser on the other.

"You have these parents who are very business- and result-oriented," John Katzman observes. "In the same way they expect someone who works for them to work all night and close the deal, they approach their kids like a subordinate whose job is to get into Harvard. At any given moment when the kid is doing something off-strategy, like dating, the parent is all over them and saying, 'What haven't you done today to get the Harvard account?' What a New York parent wants is to know that somebody is on the job and it will be fine."

Susan agrees. "Don't think she's a sweetie pie," she says appreciatively of Cohen. "Katherine is a tough cookie. Some of the kids don't like her because she's so tough. She gets things done. The parent can always use 'Katherine says you have to get [your application] out. If you don't want to listen to me, listen to her. She's the one who's pushing this. She's the one who knows it has to be out early.' "

While Cohen claims she'll never get rich doing college counseling (she refers to it as a "calling"), she isn't quite ready to don ashes and sackcloth. She hopes to open an L.A. office next year. She's started IvyWise Kids with Nina Bauer, a Dalton School graduate, to help parents navigate the perilous shoals of pre-school and kindergarten admissions. There are plans to have an expert on boarding schools join the staff. And Cohen is hard at work on a "distance learning" Web product to provide the world beyond Wall Street the benefit of her wisdom. Company sales are in the $500,000 range and growing quickly, she says. And IvyWise baseball caps, bearing little messages on the back such as EARLY DECISION, EARLY ACTION, and ACCEPTED, are available in a variety of colors.

"This is for me to reach the middle market," Cohen explains of the Web product. "It might be $200 for the whole kit. You might get e-mail time with an Ivy-college adviser."

The exercises may include mock college applications such as her platinum-package clientele are now given to evaluate. "It's great to put the student in the shoes" of a college-admissions officer, she explains. "Why is this guy with 1,500 SATs getting voted off the island?"

SUSAN AWAITS THE RESULTS OF HER TWO-year college-admissions campaign on her daughter's behalf; she sounds almost mellow. She achieved that state of grace after suffering what she describes, not entirely in jest, as a "semi-nervous breakdown."

She was also encouraged by the words of a billionaire business mogul she knows socially. "The world," he told her, "is run by C students."

"Anna," Susan says serenely, "is going to be successful wherever she goes." ■

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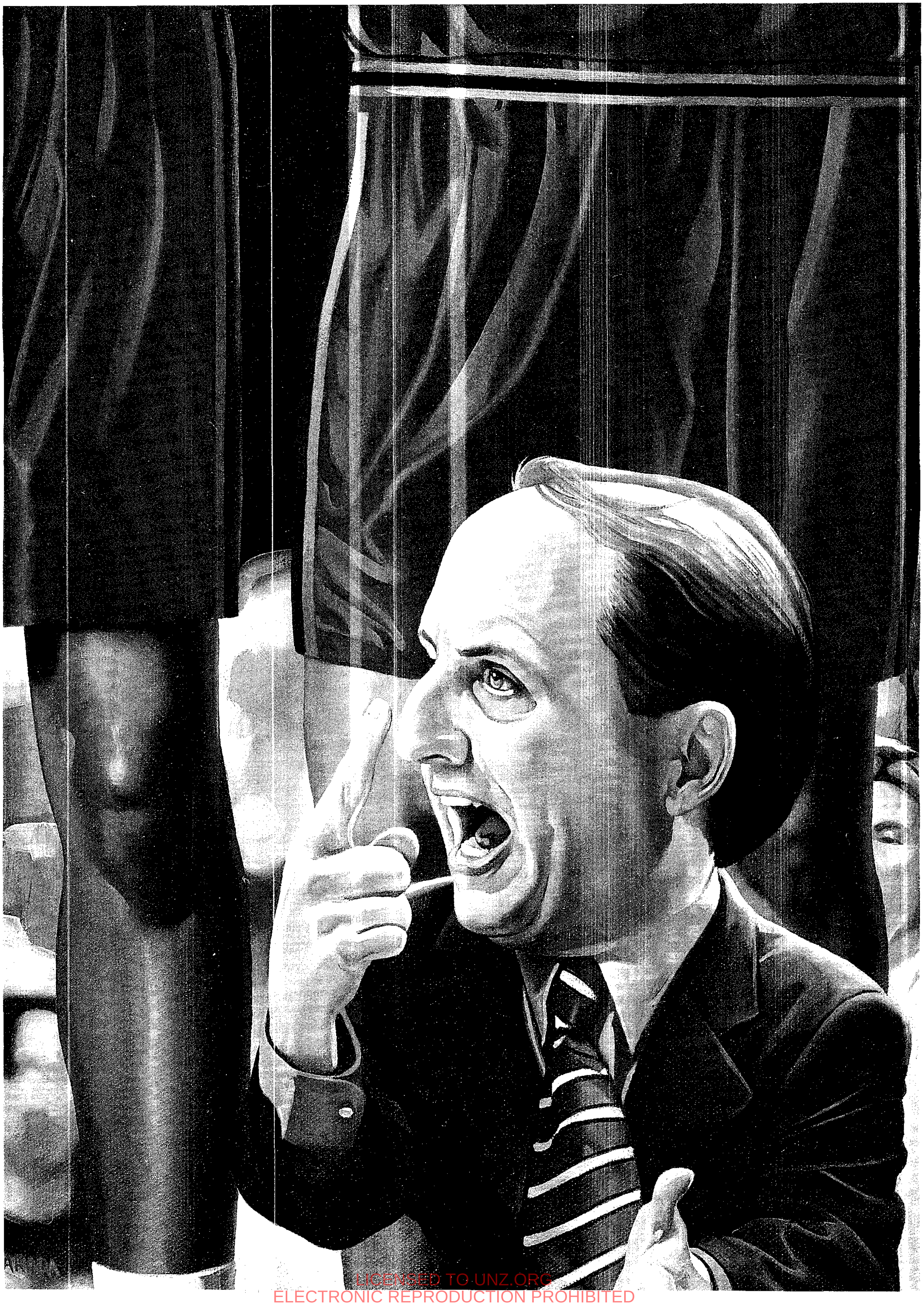


SMILE AND YOU LOSE

The driven, intense son of another driven, intense coach, Jeff Van Gundy believes that the two worst things to happen to the NBA are God and golf. Why? They sap players' intensity. But imagine what the game would look like if his players were as intense as he is.

By Chris Smith

ENTER SHAQ, BATHED IN TV LIGHTS. Spielberg, Capshaw, Katzenberg, Ovitz, and Beatty twinkle in behind. A few feet away, in a cavernous hallway beneath L.A.'s Staples Center, Lakers coach Phil Jackson convenes a pregame press conference. I ask him about the recent favorable comparisons of Red Holzman, who coached Jackson on the 1969-70 championship Knicks, and Jeff Van Gundy, the current Knicks boss, who is gaining on Holzman in career victories. Any similarities between the two men, Phil?

"Absolutely not one," he snaps. "Except they're both short. Red had a temperament that was so even and so paced, his manner with players was so affable and gentle. He was a man who sat on the bench and rarely stood and yelled. Jeff, sometimes you have to call three seconds on him, he's so far out on the floor." Jackson lets the laughter die away before adding a grudging compliment. "He's a very intelligent coach, there's no doubt about that."

Nearby, the limousine of Van Gundy's Chappaqua neighbor, Bill Clinton, is pulling into a loading dock.

Van Gundy is oblivious to it all. Around the bend from Jackson he is squatting low to the ground, his face pressed to a four-inch-square TV monitor. Van Gundy is running a section of videotape back and forth, memorizing plays from a January game between the Lakers and the Knicks at Madison Square Garden. His outfit is as plain as a Mormon missionary's: white dress shirt open at the collar and nondescript gray pants. The Knicks have been dreadful in consecutive losses to Vancouver and Portland, and Van Gundy badly needs a win today—not just to salvage the road trip but to stanch the first real grousing from his players.

After ten minutes in a knee-busting crouch, Van Gundy rises and walks into the Knicks locker room expressionless, his sunken eyes, ringed in raccoon-black circles, fixed on some invisible point in the middle distance. He stops to diagram defensive strategy on the white-erase board as Allan Houston stretches on the floor and Larry Johnson nods along to the CD playing through his headphones. Van Gundy doesn't say a word as he steps into the visiting coach's office and shuts the door behind him.

Three hours later, Van Gundy is scribbling again. The 18,997 fans are screaming. The Laker Girls are hootchie-kooing in black Lycra. With 5.6 seconds left in the game, the Knicks are up 79–78, but after this time-out the Lakers have the ball and the last shot. Van Gundy is calmly using his blue Sharpie to construct a box around Shaquille O'Neal: Mar-

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERTO PARADA

cus Camby will play in front of Shaq, Kurt Thomas behind him, with Glen Rice and Latrell Sprewell on either side.

The Lakers inbound the ball to guard Derek Fisher, who dribbles frantically to his left, harassed by Charlie Ward, searching for an opening to pass to Shaq. With the clock down to three seconds, Fisher heaves up a fifteen-foot jumper that skitters harmlessly against the backboard as time expires. Knicks win.

Van Gundy retreats to his office. Congratulations, he's told, on a great game plan. That's all it takes to summon his trademark gloomy sarcasm. "I'm just glad," Van Gundy says, "that they won despite me."

YOU'VE GOT TO LIKE A MAN WHO TELLS YOU right off that the biggest thing he's learned as Knicks head coach is how to be a better liar. "No one wants to hear the truth," Van Gundy says one morning in Westchester at the Knicks' practice site, after his daily chat with the New York media. "They want to hear political correctness. Especially in this town. One thing you don't want to do is be too honest."

It takes a bit of Machiavelli to survive six seasons as Knicks coach. Van Gundy has navigated a nasty public power struggle that nearly got him fired, grabbed the leg of Alonzo Mourning in the middle of an on-court brawl, and waged an unpopular, though admirably loyal, campaign to defend Patrick Ewing. Nothing so melodramatic has happened this year, other than Van Gundy's taking twelve stitches above his left eye when he broke up another Knicks fight. Yet in some ways, this has been among Van Gundy's most difficult seasons.

His biggest challenge hasn't been a shortage of talent—though the Knicks are an unbalanced bunch, with too many shooting guards and not enough muscle under the basket. Van Gundy's greatest difficulty has been locating the Knicks' emotional pulse. In early March, he castigated the team's "nature" as "sleepy and lethargic"—the exact dispositional opposite of his own Diet Coke–fueled insomniac frenzy. Six months into the season, Van Gundy is still expressing bafflement at his club's unpredictability, claiming he doesn't know whether the aggressive or the sluggish Knicks will hit the court on any given night. Part of this is coachly posturing, Van Gundy's attempt to goad his players' pride. But his suffering is sincere—with the strain showing most graphically in mid-February. In a meeting with the five Knicks starters, the tightly wound Van Gundy nearly burst into tears.

"They thought I'd been too hard on 'em," Van Gundy says. "This is more of a sensitive group than I'm used to. Sprewell said, 'When we're down, don't kick us.' But my point with this team is, they don't police themselves, so unfortunately I'm in the role of bad cop all the time. Since then, I may have toned down the volume, but my job is still to tell them the truth."

Later, Allan Houston met with the head coach and suggested he smile now and then. "I'm not a positive guy," Van Gundy says, sounding resolute but weary. "My intensity is my greatest strength. It's also my greatest weakness."

ONE DAY AT THE BEGINNING OF THEIR recent West Coast swing, the Knicks practice at the University of San Francisco. As Van Gundy walks out of the gym afterward, a tall, athletic-looking student walks in. "How ya doing?" Van Gundy asks. "You play ball here?"

"Yeah!" the USF student replies, clearly excited that the coach of the Knicks has any interest in him.

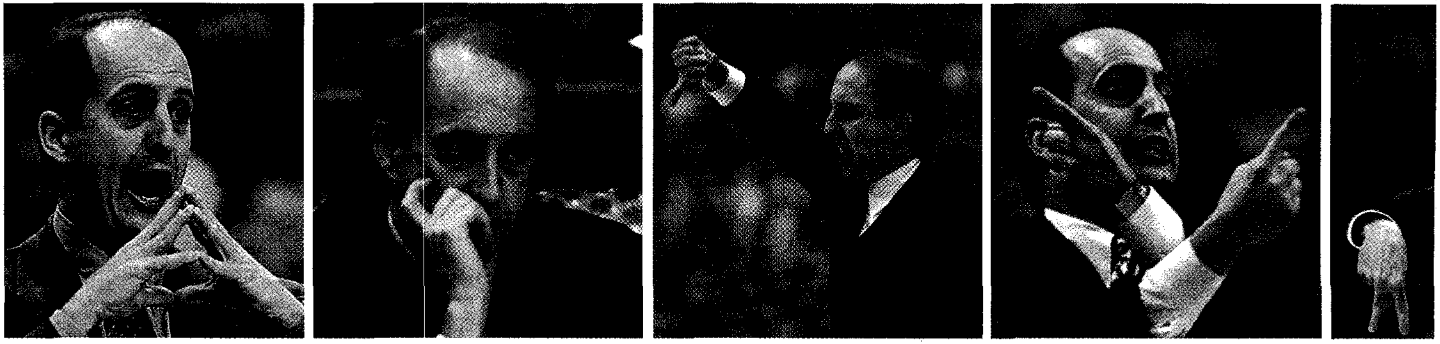
"How'd you do this year?" Van Gundy asks. The nervous kid starts to list some stats—"Well, I did okay, I had about five rebounds and ten points a game"—when Van Gundy interrupts. "Not you—the team!" he says. "How did the team do? Geez, you're like all players!" Van Gundy smiles a little to show the startled boy that he isn't angry. But Van Gundy isn't joking either.

Unlike most other coaches, who came to this worldview in adulthood, Van Gundy had "There is no *I* in *team*" mixed in with his nursery rhymes. His mother, Cindy, was raised in Indiana, that crucible of basketball fanaticism. His father, Bill, spent 42 years working basketball's backwaters, coaching at colleges ranging from tiny to small. For Jeff Van Gundy, there was never any play in playing ball. Winning and losing was all. Winning meant you got to stay in the same school another year. Losing meant Dad got fired and you had to make a new set of friends in some other town. Just before he started high school, Jeff and family moved from Martinez, California, to Brockport, New York, outside of Rochester, when his father became coach at Geneseo State College, and Jeff seems to have internalized central New York's pervasive cloud cover.

Bigger forces than meteorology, however, formed Van Gundy's outlook. "I want to say this in a nice way," says Stan Van Gundy, Jeff's older brother. "Our mom is very much a perfectionist. When you came home from school, it was, 'What's the minus for?,' not 'Congratulations on the A.' Even athletically, even though she was supportive, you weren't going to shoot three-for-ten and have Mom think you had a great game. Jeff has certainly got a lot of those things from her. *Flexible* is not a word that would be used to describe Jeff."

A happier Van Gundy legacy, however, is visible almost every night the Knicks play. The Knicks aren't the biggest or most physical team in the NBA, but they play the league's most tenacious defense. Its building blocks were formed in thimble-sized gyms in places most Knicks have never heard of, towns like Greece, Spencerport, and Gates, where Jeff Van Gundy picked up floor burns as a hustling high-school point guard. "No matter who Jeff might ever have on a team, he'd always be defense first," Stan says. "You play defense, you rebound the ball, you take care of it, and you don't turn it over. A lot of coaches think that, but it's what *he* grew up with."

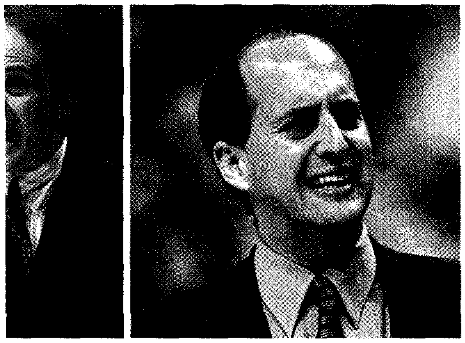
From his father, Jeff inherited his passion for competition—such is Jeff's obses-



Photographs, from left: Andy Lyons/Allsport; AP/Wide World Photos (5).

sion that when he couldn't make Yale's freshman team, Van Gundy transferred from the Ivy League to Menlo, a California junior college, so he could continue playing ball—but he avoids his dad's stylistic excesses. Bill Van Gundy was a raging, vein-bulging coach in the Bobby Knight mold. "I don't think he runs the emotional gamut I ran," Bill Van Gundy says. "Wins were really good for me. Unfortunately, he takes losses pretty much the same way I did. He's outwardly much more calm, but it's churning him inside, there's no doubt. The difference is, I let some of it out. I can't tell Jeff to relax because he'd have the perfect retort: 'Oh, yeah? Show me. You know how? Show me.' And I didn't know how. I don't know how."

Jeff Van Gundy doesn't smoke, doesn't drink, can't dance ("No," Marcus Camby says with a laugh, "Coach doesn't have any rhythm"), and during the season hardly sees his wife, Kim, and their 5-year-old daughter, Mattie. "But I don't sleep in the office," Van Gundy says. "That's been embellished." His prodigious preparation pays off: One night Van Gundy is yelling out Toronto's upcoming offensive play even before the Raptors cross midcourt. On his office couch, there's a white pillow with *X*'s and *O*'s and arrows scrawled on it in black pen. "No, I didn't draw that," Van Gundy says. "The diagram doesn't make sense. It was drawn by a player who was trying to have some fun with me. A player who'll never become a coach."



"HE MAY THINK I'M A LITTLE CRAZED IN MY OBSESSION—BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? WHEN LATRELL TALKS ABOUT BASKETBALL, HE SURE SOUNDS LIKE ME."

Basketball was young Jeff's way of being close to his father and brother. Yet now some of Jeff's greatest triumphs can't be shared with his family. When Pat Riley bolted the Knicks for Miami in 1995, he wanted to take Jeff with him as an assistant; the Knicks refused, so Riley hired Stan Van Gundy instead. The Knicks and Heat are the bitterest of rivals, having met four times in the playoffs, with Jeff's Knicks eliminating Stan's Heat the past three years in a row. Last year, the senior Van Gundys retired to Miami—but offer a joke about Mom and Dad going over to the Heat's side and no one in the family laughs. "I wish that was true," Stan says. "Regardless of any of their protestations otherwise, when the Knicks play the Heat, they want the Knicks to win. Because he's the head coach and I'm not. It's not awkward—for me, it's extremely painful."

"The Heat-Knicks rivalry, especially playoff time, is really a bad time for this family," Bill Van Gundy says. The parents don't attend any of the brother-versus-brother games. Instead, Bill and Cindy sit at home in separate rooms with separate TVs, he with the sound off, she with it up.

MARK JACKSON IS PUSHING THE ball crisply upcourt in a rare Knicks fast break. On the left wing, Kurt Thomas is wide open. Jackson looks right and flings a behind-the-back pass . . . that sails ten feet wide of Thomas. Van Gundy wheels around, looking for something to kick, then stamps his foot. When Houston turns the ball over moments later, Van Gundy smashes a courtside billboard with his right fist.

The Knicks are winning by fourteen points.

Sitting close to Van Gundy during a Knicks game is like paying a two-hour visit to the Museum of Disgusted Facial Displays. Among the dozen variations are his You've-Got-to-Be-Kidding-Me Open-Mouthed Gape and Wince, mostly aimed at referees; his pained Two-Lips-Jammed-Together Frown, mostly for dumb plays by the Knicks; and, when things are really going poorly, as in a late-March loss to the New Jersey Nets, the Lower-Lip-Curled-Over-the-Upper-Lip Someone's-Gonna-Pay Fume.

Even Van Gundy's friends rag him about his haggard appearance (Patrick Ewing: "I'm flipping through DirectTV and I see the Knicks, so I call him up and say, 'Damn, Jeff, quit putting it off—just go ahead and shave all the hair off your head! Forget combing those strands over the top.' " Pat Riley: "I tell him, 'You ought to put some of that light blush under your goddamn bags.' Though sometimes I even wonder if his look is calculated—so his players see a guy who every day is caring his ass off about winning").

Publicly and privately, Van Gundy's deepest expressions of outrage have come in his season-long battle against what he perceives as the Knicks' passivity, a trait that rears its lackadaisical head just when the Knicks appear to be building momentum. "We have proven time and again that we don't have the maturity to handle winning," Van Gundy says, his words matter-of-fact but his tone loaded with contempt. "It softens us up instead of making us hungrier for more. What I'm trying to get them to see is how predictable they've been in their irresponsibility."

Everything is moral with Van Gundy: Losses are due to a lack of heart, an absence of character, a deficiency of will. Maybe it's all calculated to cover up the Knicks' personnel flaws, but the scolding quickly grows tiresome. A day after the Knicks blast the Bulls by 21 points, avenging an earlier, inexplicable loss, Van Gundy is already bracing for a relapse in a rematch against Cleveland, another of the NBA's worst teams. "Now, tomorrow, we're coming off a big win—how do you respond? Do you try to see how little you can put into the game and still win? Or do you come out and give the maximum and demand greatness of yourself? What is predictable is that we won't do that."

Van Gundy believes he doesn't need any more of a bond with his players than a shared love of the game, but even he is amused by the cultural chasm separating him from Sprewell, Camby, Houston, or L.J. "You know what always amazes me?" says Van Gundy, who turned 39 in January. "I'm very close to some of these guys in age. And we couldn't be further apart in lives. Not me positive, them negative. But politics, music, food—there's nothing in common. I've never been on a PlayStation 2 in my life, and they are addicted. The music they listen to, I have no idea who it is, and they probably couldn't tell you one song that I like, who wrote it, sang it."

So what *was* the last CD Van Gundy cranked up loud? He looks at me blankly. "I don't own any CDs," he says. Okay—what music does he love? There's a long pause. "One of my college roommates was into the Police, and I got to like them," Van Gundy ventures. "But I hear one of the guys left the band."

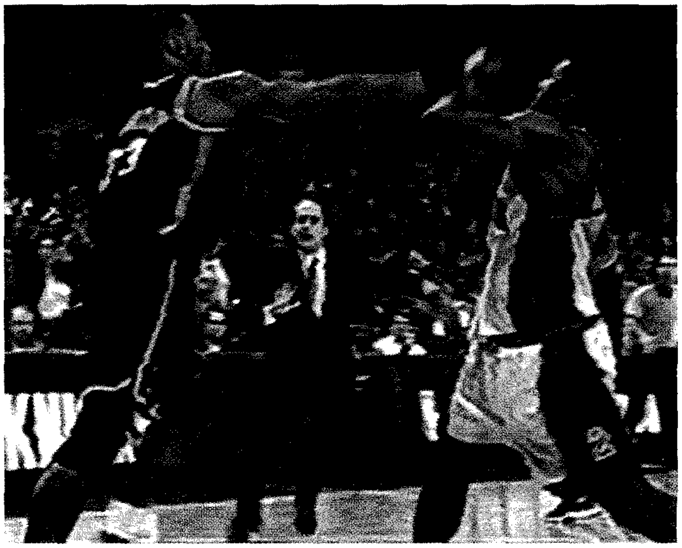
You mean Sting?

"Yeah, that's it," Van Gundy says. "I understand he's got a solo career, right?"

THIS SEASON'S KNICKS HAVE A DISTINCTLY southern, born-again-Christian vibe; *humane* is the best word for their collective off-court nature. Even Marcus Camby, who grew up in one of the toughest parts of Hartford, is a laid-back guy who aspires to work with children.

Van Gundy is all for good citizenship; he just wishes his team would display more of the burning, single-minded devotion that possesses him. He's complained that the two worst things to happen to the modern NBA are God and golf. "And I don't mean that in a derogatory way to God," Van Gundy says. "But I'll tell you what I do have a problem with—we have it in our situation here. We let a preacher into our locker room. Spends as much time as he wants with our players before games. Now, do people in offices have preachers coming into their place of business, interrupting their work? No. They have to do it before or after work. They don't get to do it during work. That's the problem I have. As a team and an organization, you've got to try to minimize those distractions. It used to be alcohol and women more. I think we've given this guy, this pastor, too much freedom. And I think the interaction between people before games, opposing sides, the fraternization, is wrong for the league, it's wrong for competition. Everybody's hugging before games, praying together."

"EVERYBODY'S HUGGING BEFORE GAMES, PRAYING TOGETHER," SAYS VAN GUNDY. "IT'S WRONG FOR THE LEAGUE, WRONG FOR COMPETITION."



Before February's trade deadline, Van Gundy wanted to reacquire his favorite rugged old-school player, Charles Oakley, from the Toronto Raptors but settled for Mark Jackson. "Everybody says, 'This team has leadership, this team doesn't have leadership,' " Van Gundy says. "That's wrong. Every team has leadership. The leadership is the best players. But there's positive leadership and there's negative leadership. And we have positive leadership. Sometimes I wish it was more forceful leadership. But the only way you can have total forceful leadership is if the best players are doing the right thing every day."

Since Ewing escaped to Seattle last summer, Sprewell is clearly the Knicks' best player. Van Gundy has waged a savvy, low-key campaign in the media since October, talking Sprewell up as a pillar of accountability, and last month calling Sprewell "the most important person in the Knicks organization." Van Gundy pulls Sprewell aside for private, postgame chats, asking Sprewell's take on the mood of the team. "One thing about Latrell, you can ask him a question and he never gives up his teammate, but he'll also let you know what's happening," Van Gundy says. "I love his honesty. He may think I'm a little bit crazed in my obsession—but you know what? When Latrell talks about basketball, he sure sounds like me."

"What's impressed me the most about Jeff is his ability to get guys to do the right thing defensively," Sprewell says, sounding very much like his boss. "He does it just with the principles, the structure of practices, the everyday teaching of certain concepts. Jeff was fortunate to be up under Riley, who was really good at teaching it, and the system is pretty much the same system."

Lately, though, the side of Sprewell that's leery of being co-opted by authority has resurfaced. "We're just going to keep playing and keep sticking to the game plan," Sprewell says after the Lakers game completes a road trip of two wins and three losses, "and if that's what beats us, then that's not on us as players."

Van Gundy dismisses Sprewell's statement, saying it's been blown out of proportion by the *Post*'s "trying to create a story. Me and Latrell have no problems."

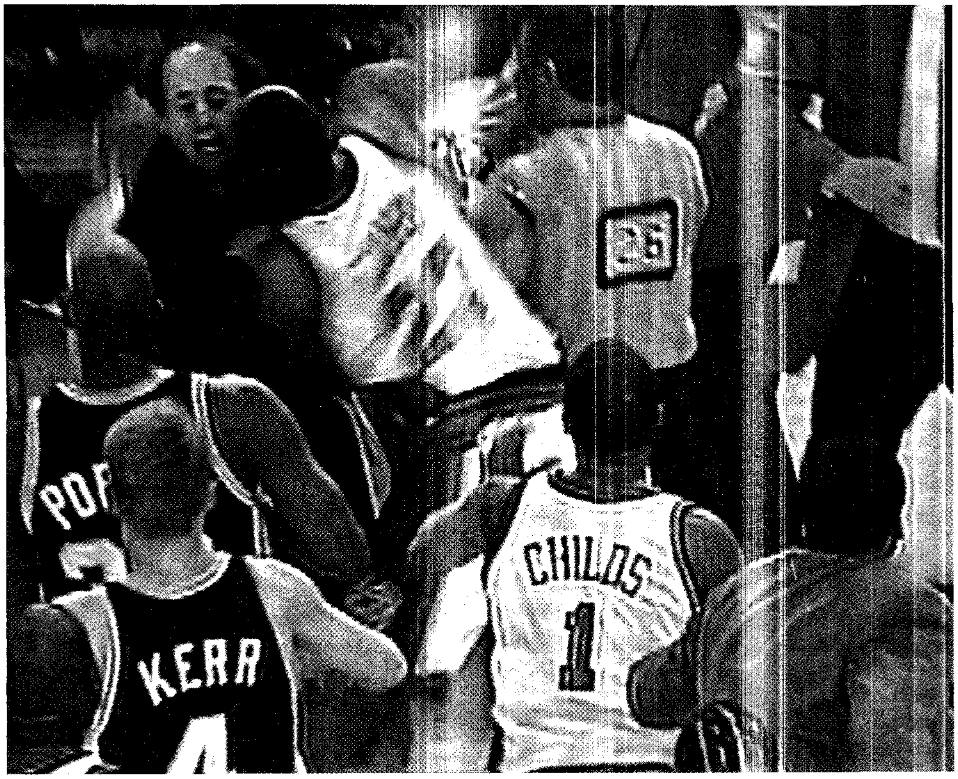
Ask the Knicks why they've come to respect a man so different from themselves and they all speak a version of Marcus Camby's words: "Because we know how hard he works and how bad he wants to win," says the Knicks' rubber-limbed center. "When your coach is like that, it trickles down to the team. You don't just want to win for yourself; you want to play and win for your coach. You can tell by the permanent bags under his eyes—all he does is eat and sleep basketball. We want to play hard for him because we know how much he puts into it."

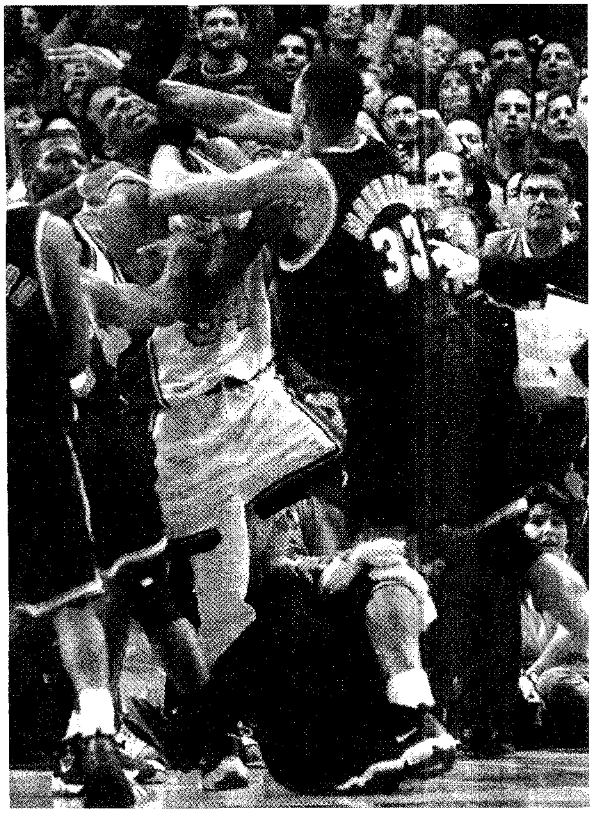
Yet as Camby goes on, the legacy of his rocky beginning with Van Gundy emerges. When then-general manager Ernie Grunfeld traded Oakley for Camby in 1998, it was against Van Gundy's vehement protests; even when Camby was in a Knicks uniform, Van Gundy buried him on the bench and embarrassed him with jibes about Camby's work ethic. "He thinks that he knows every little detail there is to know about basketball," Camby says. "That's because he works so hard and watches so much film. Sometimes you want to second-guess or question his judgment, but he always has facts to back it up. He can never be wrong. The stuff he said when I first came here, I've been able to look past that and look at the broader picture, trying to win the championship. But don't get me wrong—I don't forget."

Other players have attempted to reach out to Van Gundy, with mixed results. "I give him books," says the devoutly Christian Charlie Ward. "Family books, couples devotionals, inspirational devotionals. I give him the information, but as far as sitting down and talking to him about it, that's on him."

Allan Houston is, like Van Gundy, the son of a coach, but otherwise Houston couldn't be more different from Van Gundy—a man with limitless basketball talents but only intermittent fire. This year, though, Houston claims, he's bonded with the coach. "One of the turning points in my being here with Jeff is when we went and talked about how he could lighten up sometimes," Houston says. "Not lighten up as far as work. Just smile sometimes. He was receptive to it."

But Houston continues to perplex Van Gundy. Two nights after erupting from a shooting slump by scoring 39 points, Houston barely registers against New Jersey. At halftime of what turns out to be an embarrassing loss, though, Houston spends part of his time presenting an award to three schoolteachers during an on-court ceremony. "It's hard to knock guys looking out for other people," Van Gundy says. "Allan is a wonderful man. He tries to accommodate every reporter, he tries to accommodate every charitable





Fight club: Clockwise from left, Van Gundy hurrying into battle; Marcus Camby misses San Antonio's Danny Ferry, head-butts coach; Van Gundy (on Alonzo Mourning's leg) tries to protect his player.

request. As far as basketball, I think he'd be better off not trying to be everything to everybody."

Taking anything Pat Riley says at face value is dangerous, particularly when it relates to the Knicks. But Riley remains a sincere friend and admirer of Van Gundy's and offers his advice with what sounds like genuine feeling. "As level-headed as Jeff is, he's at war with the game, at war with the elements," Riley says. "We all go through that. You begin to analyze the game. You overanalyze it. You overanalyze everything. You can do it with numbers, you can do it with video, you can do it with offensive playbooks, defensive philosophies. And eventually that subsides. It actually becomes a lot easier for you. It's the pursuit of knowledge in basketball that's important—this is not rocket scientry, but it's the pursuit of knowledge that makes it a lot easier to coach, and you become a better coach.

"To me, it's the one thing that haunts a coach more than anything else: When does a coach get to a point where he feels he's arrived? One day, it just all sort of happens. It just sort of comes. And there's no angst. I had a lot of angst, and Jeff has a lot now. I saw a clip last night with Jeff on television. The Knicks just went out West, and they've got this five-game road trip, and he said there's three things they have to do as a team—they have three goals. I can't even remember what they were, but these are the things you're constantly, always doing as a young coach, thinking these things up. It doesn't mean they're wrong, but what you eventually do is you let go of a lot of those things and you stick with the core of what you believe in. The game will absolutely bring you to your knees."

Van Gundy stays up later, pounds more Diet Coke, watches more game tape. Still, his team's energy periodically vaporizes. Maybe the Knicks would fall apart without Van Gundy's whipping. Or perhaps there's a hoops corollary to the physics equation for the conservation of matter: There's only a finite amount of intensity available to any one team.

VAN GUNDY IS NOW THIRD IN WINS AS a Knicks coach, behind Joe Lapchick and Red Holzman. "Jeff has a little bit of Red in him," says Dave Checketts, president of Madison Square Garden and a man with whom Van Gundy has had a tangled relationship. The lowest point came in the spring of 1999, when Checketts secretly explored replacing Van Gundy with Phil Jackson. Van Gundy saved his job with a miraculous trip to the NBA finals.

"We've come a long way since those days," Checketts says, offering nothing but praise for Van Gundy. "I hope I've earned his trust. He knows I'm gonna do what I think is in the best interest of the franchise every time. The thing that's in the best interest of the franchise right now is to have Jeff Van Gundy as the head coach. I see that happening for a long time."

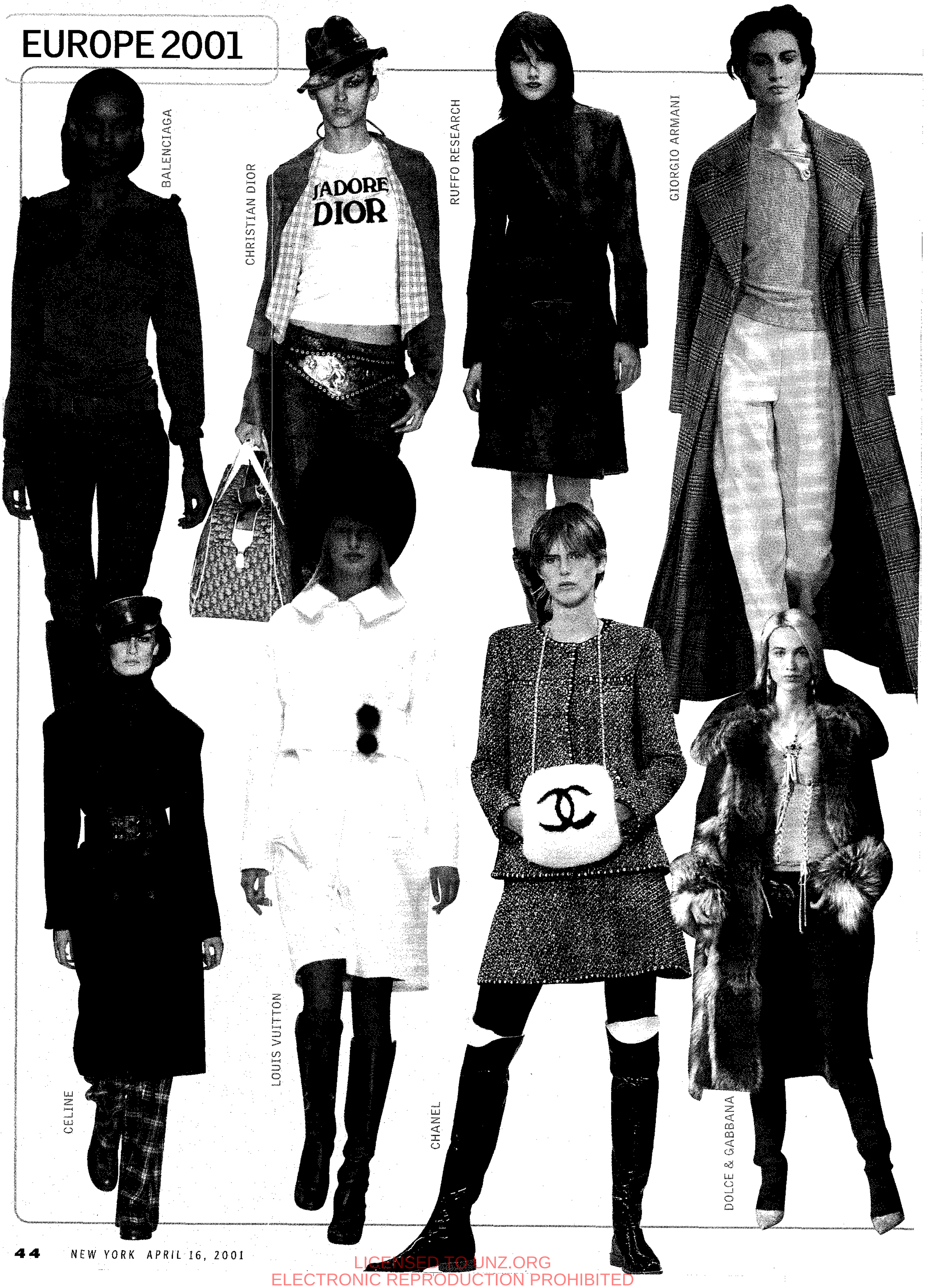
Van Gundy feels no job security, even with two more seasons to run on his $14 million contract. "You're judged year to year," he says. "I do think that Scott [Layden, the Knicks' general manager] and Dave believe in me, without qualification. In many ways, I know I've got it as good as anybody in the NBA. And yet, if you lose, you're subject to changes like anybody else in this league. Great coaches, if it goes bad, they get fired. There's change. Of players. And GMs. And presidents."

Besides, how can Van Gundy predict the next two years when he claims to be baffled by his next two weeks with the Knicks? Van Gundy says he's more uncertain about this team's playoff prospects than he's been about those of any Knicks group he's coached before. He's worried about Camby's durability and strength at the end of a season in which he's played the most minutes of his career. He's worried about Glen Rice's sore foot and Mark Jackson's ability to lead and Allan Houston's head. "Even in years where Patrick Ewing was hurt going into the playoffs, we had that anchor and everybody was in familiar roles," Van Gundy says. "Now the roles have all changed. Until you get into heated playoff situations, you just don't know how guys are gonna respond."

Jeff Van Gundy's voice is hoarse. He looks miserable. He couldn't be happier. ■

Photographs: clockwise from left, AP/Wide World Photos/MSG (2); AP/Wide World Photos.

EUROPE 2001


BALENCIAGA
CHRISTIAN DIOR
JADORE DIOR
RUFFO RESEARCH
GIORGIO ARMANI
CELINE
LOUIS VUITTON
CHANEL
DOLCE & GABBANA

FALL WITH A BANG

Rural chic, rock chicks, and *Rosemary's Baby* ruled European runways—while backstage, the Gucci Group and LVMH waged a turf war. And the fashion flock? They sat back and enjoyed the fireworks. **By Mark Holgate**

It was the first week of March, the European fall 2001 collections were just kicking off, and already fashion's troops were shell-shocked. The few diligent American journalists and buyers who didn't skip the London shows were rewarded—they were spared the ordeal of getting to Milan from New York. Unseasonably snowy spring weather closed the city's Linate and Malpensa airports. One unlucky flight-load of editors—including Kate Betts and her lieutenants at *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Vogue*'s Grace Coddington—were rerouted from Milan to Zurich, where they were left stranded on the tarmac and forced to while away the hours watching *Charlie's Angels*. From there it was a long, *long* train journey to Italy, after which our plucky stiletto-clad heroines staggered straight from the Milanese railway station—baggage

YVES SAINT LAURENT
MARNI
PRADA
BALLY
GUCCI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY firstVIEW.com

in tow—to **Versace**. The lights went down, the soundtrack began to thunder and pound, and it was on with the show.

It wasn't just the schedule—the longest in history, clocking in at four weeks rather than three—that made exhaustion the most pervasive trend at the recent European shows. The fashion flock was worn out just following the machinations of the industry, with a phalanx of designers playing musical chairs at fashion houses throughout Milan and Paris.

Perhaps *Über*-model Gisele Bundchen knew what was coming—she sat this season out, walking the runway only once, at **Dolce & Gabbana**. Smart girl. It was one of the best shows, a rich, riotous take on the rock-chick wardrobe: striped Janis Joplin–worthy caftan tops, fur and leather coats and vests, and corduroy pants so narrow you feared for the models' circulation—all accessorized with over-the-knee boots, leather hip belts, and fur satchels festooned with raccoon tails.

That *Almost Famous* refrain reverberated throughout the European collections, as spring's punk/New Wave styles took a flashy, trashy turn. With these clothes, you aren't just saying "I'm with the band"—you *are* the band. At **Bottega Veneta**, designer Giles Deacon showed an all-star lineup of woven leather biker jackets, zippered shearling coats, and faded denim jeans, turning up the volume with logoed guitar cases and square bags the size of amplifiers. In Paris, **Jean Paul Gaultier** offered his homage to Prince with a mix of lingerie slips, velvet jackets, and biker leathers. And **Luella Bartley**, skipping London to show in Milan, took a riot-grrrl stance with suede flight jackets, denim miniskirts, and (less wearably) the imprint of a boot etched onto the faces of her models. You'll probably just want a few of the hits—a zippered leather jacket or a furry vest to wear with jeans—or you could end up looking like a Lynyrd Skynyrd groupie.

The European runways were being rocked in more ways than one. This was a watershed season, with many of the headlining names deciding whether to soldier on—or jump ship. John Galliano, ensconced at **Christian Dior**, is one of the few in the former category. Lately, his work for the house has been the recipient of uneven critical reaction—largely for promoting runway spectacle over wearable clothes. This time around, however, Galliano did a great job. (Perhaps the rapturous reception that met Christian Dior menswear designer Hedi Slimane's debut helped Galliano to focus.) There were lean pinstripe pantsuits, Indian-inspired mirror-embroidered jackets and hipster pants, and Gypsy-style chiffon dresses slipped under hand-painted fur coats, the whole look finished off with bags designed to look like boom boxes. And Galliano, now conversant with the first law of the corporate fashion world—"Thou shalt turn a couture house into a global brand"—mixed in a few lower-price-tagged items that will broaden Dior's customer base: T-shirts emblazoned with J'ADORE DIOR and a new range of handbags that will retail as low as $170.

Of the first generation of designers who went to work for big, Establishment fashion and luxury-goods houses, only Galliano, Marc Jacobs (at Louis Vuitton), and Michael Kors (at Celine) are still tenants. Alexander McQueen exited Givenchy. Narciso Rodriguez declared he was leaving Loewe. Burberry and its creative director Roberto Menichetti parted ways. With John Bartlett's departure from Byblos, the Paris-based designer Martine Sitbon is heading to Milan to take over the Byblos women's collections, while New Yorker Sandy Dalal will now handle the menswear.

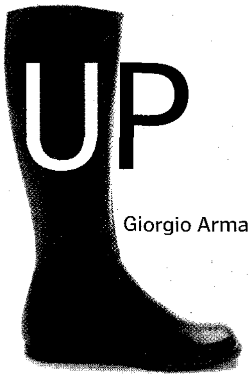
Of all these comings and goings, McQueen's split with **Givenchy** was the most high-profile. People generally roll their eyes when those in the fashion world talk of shows having moved them to tears. But there was something curiously moving about McQueen's finale, shown to a tiny audience at the Givenchy salon on the Avenue Georges V in Paris. It could have been the way the show's soundtrack weaved in a sample from Massive Attack's "Unfinished Symphony," a hint that McQueen felt he was leaving Givenchy before his work was completed. Or that some of the models had tear-stained cheeks. It certainly had a lot to do with the clothes, which were the most beautiful McQueen had ever done for the house: a long camel trench coat belted over a pair of wide-legged check pants; decidedly chic double-breasted pantsuits, some of which came with floor-length ruffled skirts over the trousers; and fifties-inspired dresses with full, circle skirts. Still, the way McQueen cheerfully bounded out at the show's end suggested that he could have easily burst into a rousing rendition of "Non, je ne regrette rien."

BURBERRY
PREEN
ALEXANDER MCQUEEN
SOPHIA KOKOSALAKI
PAUL SMITH
CLEMENTS RIBEIRO
LONDON

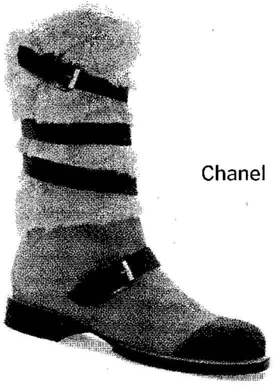
BOOT (AND BAG) UP

Europe's best accessories hit below the knee or swing from the shoulder.
A sneak preview of the tall boots and roomy satchels that will cushion your fall.

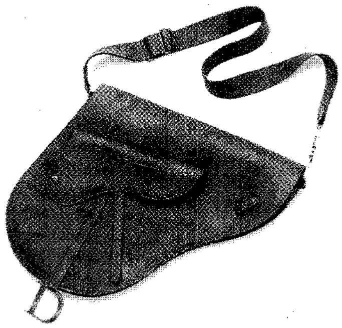
Fashion editor: Monica Schweiger • Photographed by James Worrell



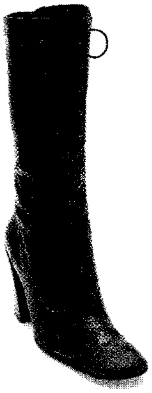
Giorgio Armani



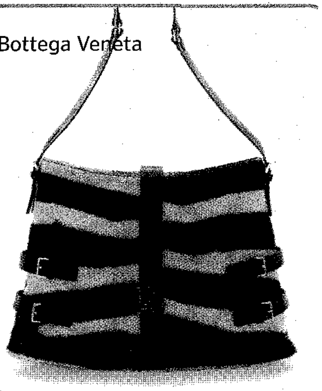
Chanel



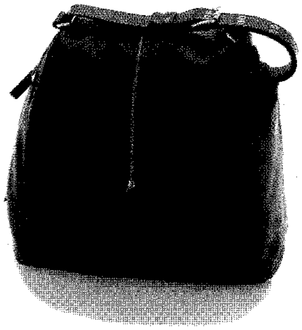
Christian Dior



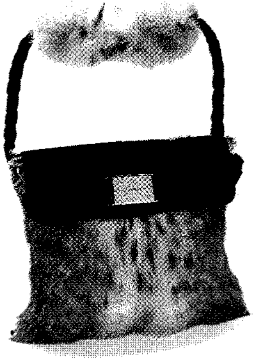
Miu Miu



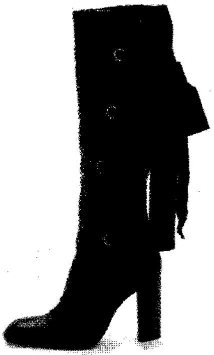
Bottega Veneta



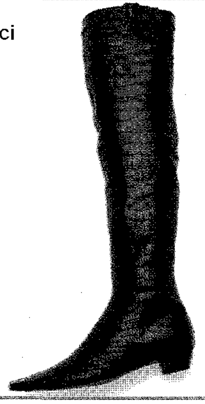
Hogan



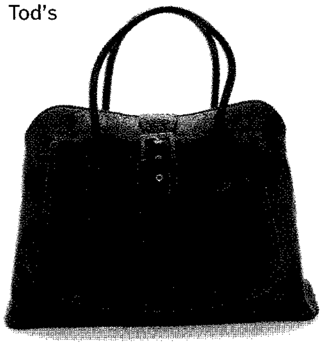
Dolce & Gabbana



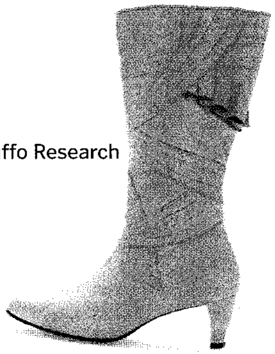
Yves Saint Laurent



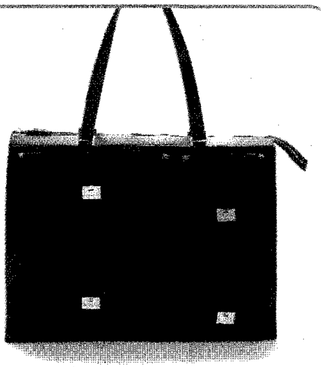
Gucci



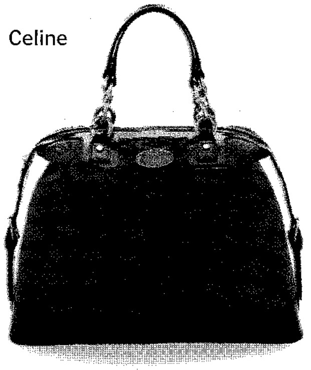
Tod's



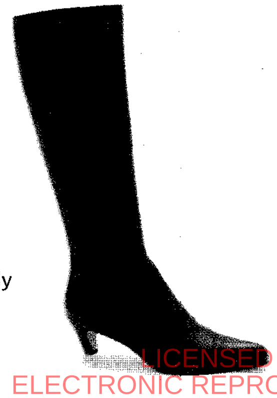
Ruffo Research



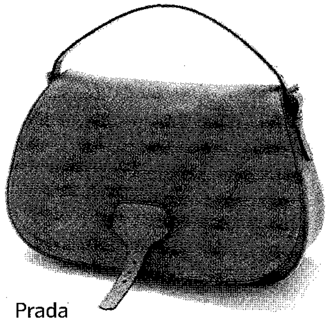
Salvatore Ferragamo



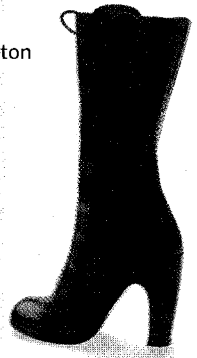
Celine



Bally

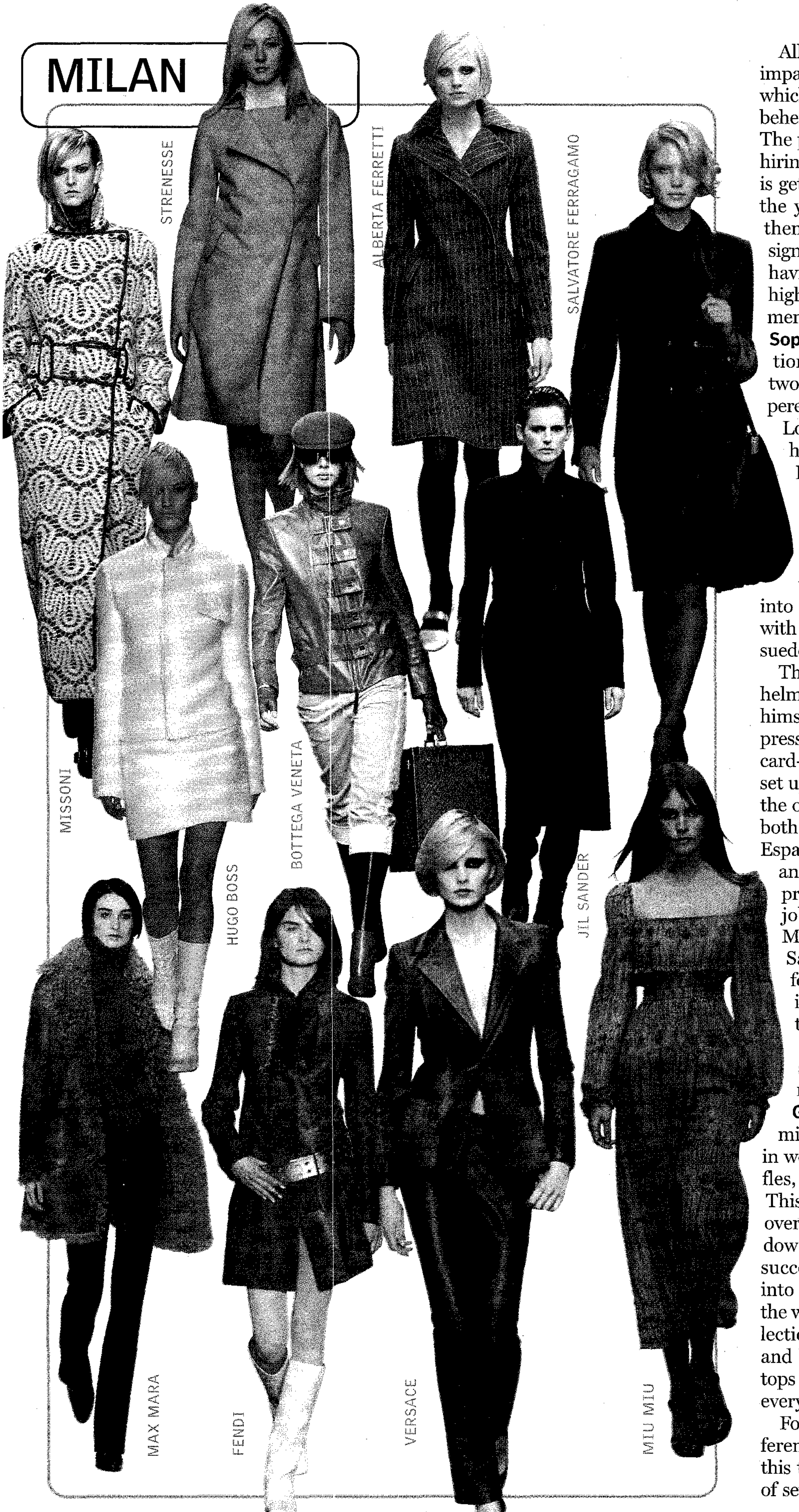


Prada



Louis Vuitton

MILAN



All of this shuffling is having a profound impact on the shape of European fashion, which is being carved up between the two behemoths LVMH and the Gucci Group. The pace at which these corporations are hiring new designers and retiring others is getting quicker and quicker; now even the youngest talents can suddenly find themselves in the spotlight. Welsh designer Julien Macdonald (best-known for having dressed the Spice Girls in their high-glitter, high-camp phase) has commenced work at Givenchy, and the gifted **Sophia Kokosalaki**—whose own collection and that of **Ruffo Research** were two of the season's standouts—is whispered to be heading to the LVMH-owned Loewe. Someone would be wise to snap her up. For her collection, shown in London, she elevated a simple white shirt and black pants out of the ordinary by adding an embroidered tulle harness that wrapped around the shirt. At Ruffo Research, she deftly worked the house's luxurious skins into leather *bustiers* draped and twisted with chiffon, mottled shearling coats, and suede military pantsuits.

The challenge for a designer taking the helm of a house is to instantly establish himself—and capture the imagination of press, buyers, and, ultimately, the credit-card-wielding public. The designer newly set up at **Emilio Pucci** (Julio Espada) and the one at **Jil Sander** (Milan Vukmirovic) both proved that this is not an easy task. Espada's take on Pucci was heavy-handed and managed to make the house's zingy prints look dull. As for Vukmirovic, the job facing him is almost Herculean. Many still long for the days when Sander designed Sander, and his efforts—save for a few masculine-looking overcoats—barely got him beyond the starting line.

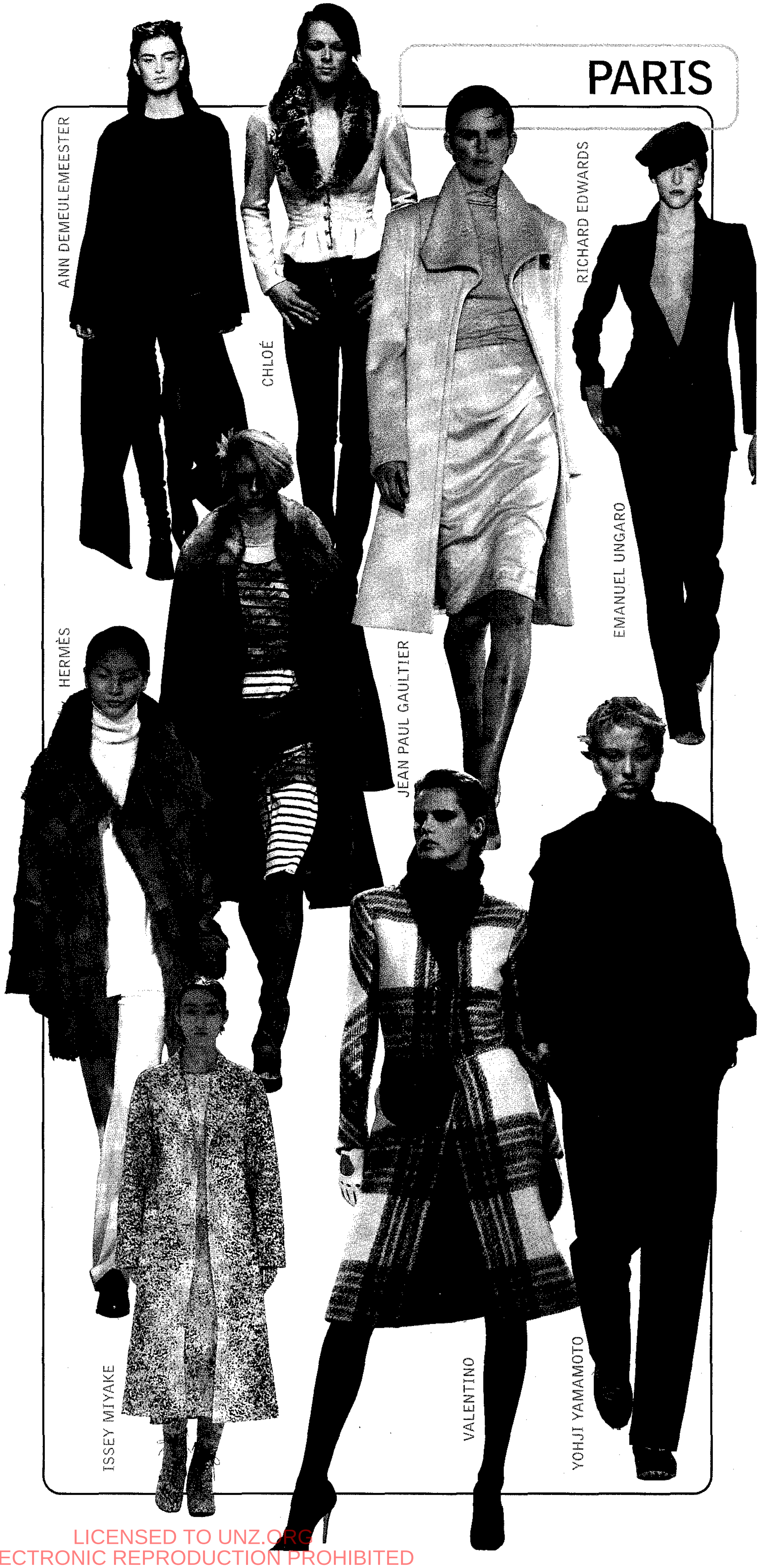
To be fair, it could have been first-season nerves. Tom Ford's second go-round at **Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche** saw him get it right, with a mix of folk-inspired embroidered coats in wool or leather, jackets lined with ruffles, and the prettiest shirred blouses. This romantic look will no doubt be all over magazines and in every store window come September. How to translate it successfully from imaginary rural idyll into real urban wardrobe? Ford showed the way, by coloring almost the entire collection that perennial city staple, black, and keeping it sexy—pairing the shirred tops with slim velvet skirts, and teaming everything with tall, high-heeled boots.

For **Gucci**, Ford drew on a decidedly different mood—the sixties. His version of this trend (which caught the imagination of several other designers) was sharp and monochromatic: leather-edged wool coats and side-zippered pants worn with low-heeled crocodile boots. At **Fendi**, Karl Lagerfeld fused Courrèges's all-white aesthetic with *2001: A Space Odyssey*, offering short patent-leather coats and shift dresses worn with go-go boots. Lagerfeld had another sixties-fest at **Chanel**, with miniskirt suits and Pop Art–inspired T-shirts. Miuccia **Prada** also looked to that decade, showing short capes and leggings mixed with sweet coats and high-waisted, square-necked dresses that finished mid-calf.

Yet this mod-squad futurism sometimes took a darker turn, with a return of that haunted, pre-sexual woman-child look made popular by Mia Farrow circa *Rosemary's Baby*: baby-doll dresses, tiny miniskirts, and Mary Janes. Prada took the allusion further, hanging oversize saddle bags from long shoulder straps so the purses grazed the knees of the models, as if they'd borrowed them from their mothers. At Gucci there was something disturbing about the mix of innocence and eroticism: Ford's finale of black lace baby-doll dresses (with built-in push-up bras) was the only misjudged moment in an otherwise faultless performance.

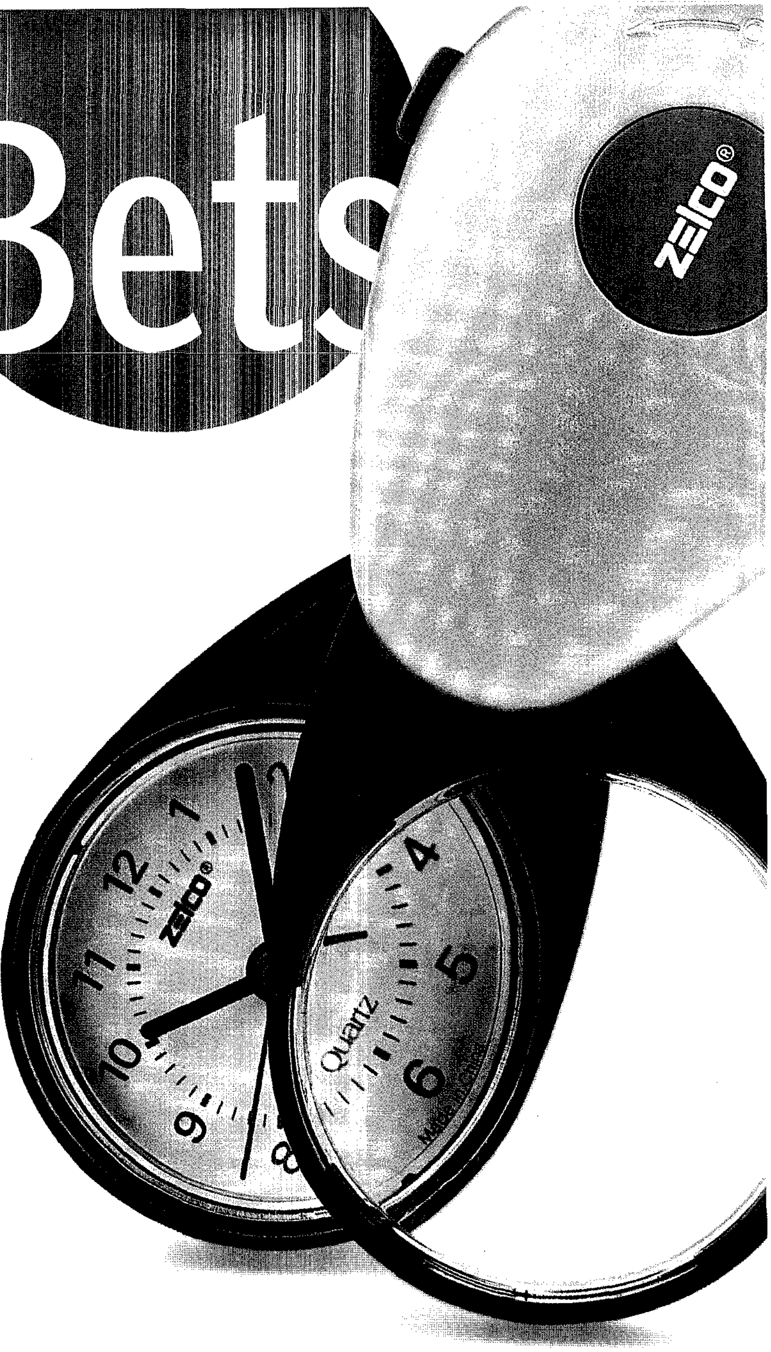
Despite this, next fall's Gucci is as desirable as anything Ford has done, a riposte, perhaps, to the criticisms that greeted spring's butch-chic clothes. The irony is that Gucci's last collection has proved to be hugely influential—from kick-starting a trend for models who look tough (the crop-haired crew of Fanni Bostrom, Erin Wasson, and Eleonora Bose were everywhere) to kicking off this fall's love affair with the corset. The corset and its curvy, full-hipped silhouette became the flip side to fashion's championing of the baby doll. Frankly, it doesn't seem like the greatest of choices—dress like a prepubescent girl or a late-nineteenth-century governess—but the hourglass silhouette *could* look wonderfully sexy, as it did at Nicolas Ghesquiere's fantastic show for **Balenciaga**. His allusions to Victorian corsetry (lacing, boning, little pleats and frills) were cast into fitted jackets that he paired with his trademark skinny pants.

But to see how all these elements might come together—folksy romance and a slightly perverse Victorian air, sixties minimalism and rock-star style—you had to look to Marc Jacobs's stellar performance for **Louis Vuitton**. There were top-stitched-yoke jersey dresses and tops, nipped-waisted high-collared jackets, and rolled-up gray denim jeans and A-line skirts with heavy zippers, finished with Russian Cossack fur hats and kinky mid-calf boots that are laced like a corset. A thrilling, imaginative show: There's no better tonic for exhaustion than that. ■



Best Bets

RIMA SUQI



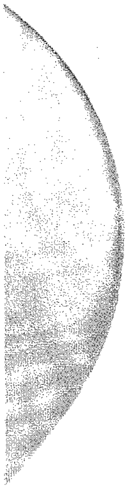
Night Moves Time isn't on your side if you can't read the clock. Zelco's new OptiClock not only has a magnifier that slides over the face, it's also illuminated by an easy-on-your-tired-eyes red light (as opposed to a harsh white light). The pocket-size clock also has a 75-decibel crescendo alarm with a snooze button ($30).

▶ **BLACKER & KOOBY**
1204 Madison Avenue, at 88th Street/212-369-8308

Hot Button You can never have too many tote bags in this town. Now that spring is in the air, it's time to give the leather one a well-deserved rest and break out something more seasonal. TG-170 carries a variety of canvas totes ($33) with Pop Art–style images and a matching button. "I love that these bags are so pop, summery, and cheap," says owner Terri Gillis, "and the button is an added bonus."

▶ **TG-170**
170 Ludlow Street/212-995-8660

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TED MORRISON

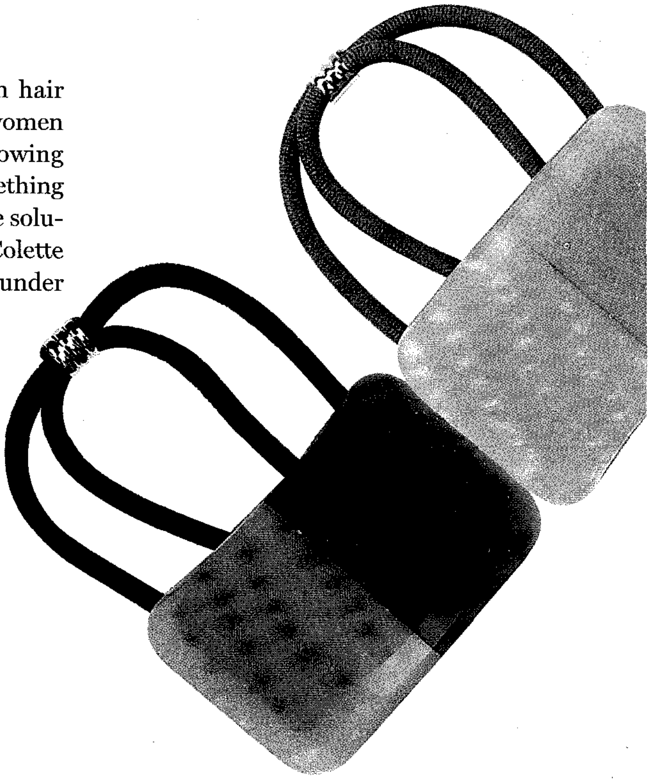


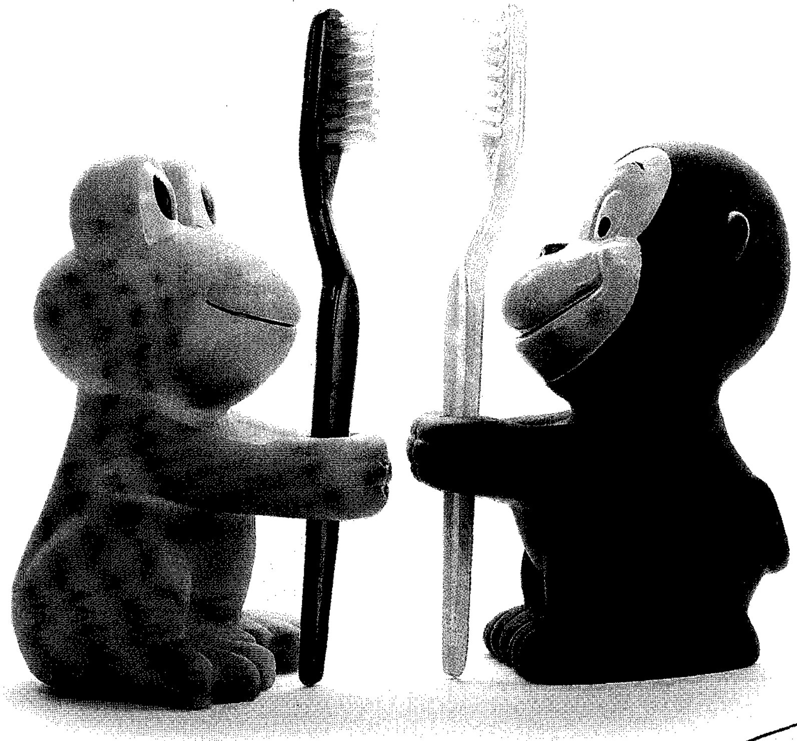
Tress for Success

At a time when hair lengths rise and fall faster than hemlines, lots of women find themselves in one of those painfully long "growing out" stages: Your hairstyle is on its way to being something fabulous, but for the time being isn't quite right. The solution? Put it up and forget about it for a few weeks. Colette Malouf's supercool glass ponies keep unruly coifs under control ($70).

▶ **BERGDORF GOODMAN**
754 Fifth Avenue, near 58th Street/212-753-7300

▶ **PRIVE**
310 West Broadway/212-274-8888





Smiles to Go

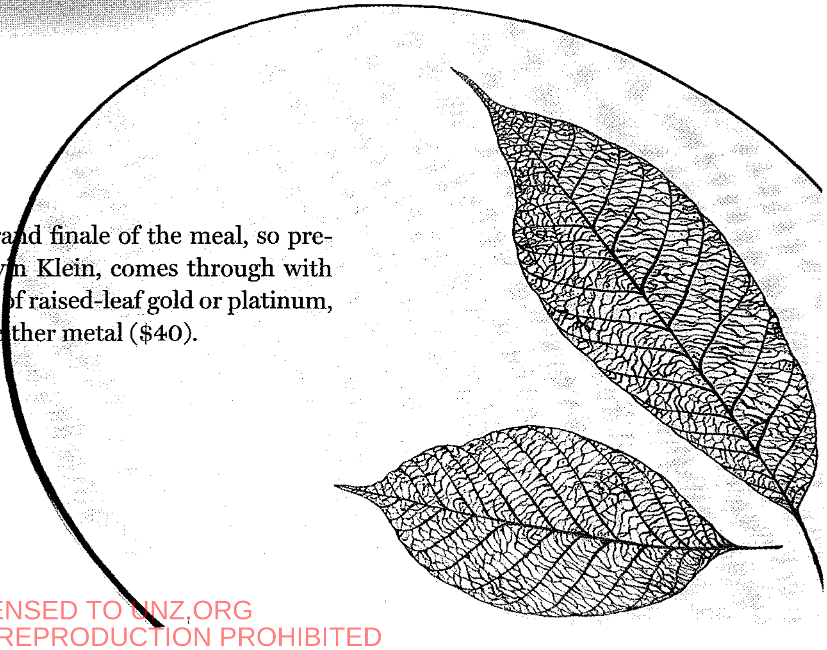
Getting your kids to brush those pearly whites can be an ongoing battle, but humor helps. "These toothbrush holders look like toys, and moms say their kids have more fun brushing with a monkey or frog than with a plain old toothbrush," says Elaine Carl, who carries them at her NoLIta store. The holders, which come with a matching brush, are made of rubber, so they're tantrum-proof ($10).

▶ **DAILY 235**
235 Elizabeth Street/212-334-9728

Sweet Inspiration

Dessert is the grand finale of the meal, so presentation counts. The master of minimalism, Calvin Klein, comes through with this Platinum Leaf dessert plate. Featuring a choice of raised-leaf gold or platinum, the line mixes well with china patterns containing either metal ($40).

▶ **CALVIN KLEIN**
654 Madison Avenue, at 60th Street/212-292-9000



Toothbrush holder photographed by Nedjeljko Matura.

SARA CARDACE

Amazing Feets

On your toes, people: Sandal season is upon us, and to make sure you put your best foot forward, we've arranged discounts at a few of our favorite pedicurists. Step right up.

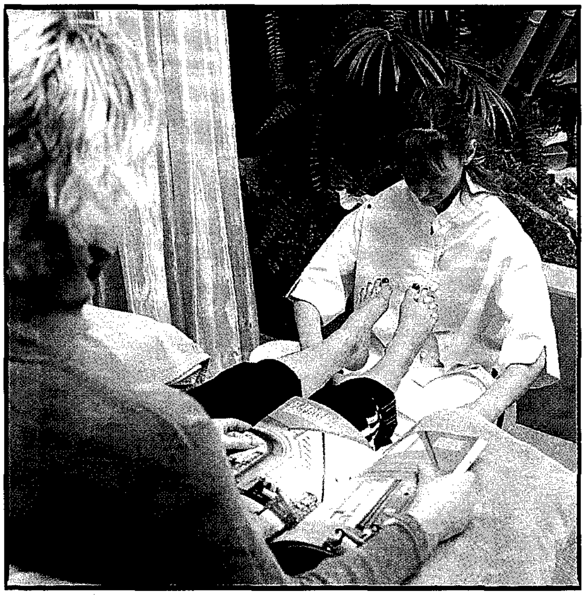
THE DAYS ARE GETTING LONGER and warmer, and that can only mean one thing: the approach of sandal season. The right pedicure can make all the difference between looking neat, pampered, and polished and looking like you spent the winter training for the marathon in combat boots. The following salons and spas have agreed to offer loyal readers pedicure services at the reduced rate of just $25 through Memorial Day, provided you mention *New York* when you make your reservation and bring this page with you to your appointment. And remember, you're not the only one who appreciates a little luxury—so please, tip generously.

The **Away Spa & Gym** at the W Hotel is a great place to splurge on luxe treatments after your pedicure, like the Citrus Firming Body Polish, a scrub-and-massage treatment with essential oils and aromatherapy ($100). Offer is valid only on weekdays.

D.esse Spa's hourlong pedicure includes your choice of peppermint, tea-tree, or rosemary foot soak, as well as a mint-cream massage. While you wait for your nails to dry, book yourself a Ginger Rosemary Full Body Scrub for just $65.

If the weather's good, ask to have your **Antonio Prieto** pedicure done in the relaxing garden. It's also offering a reduced rate of $10 (normally $20) for all haircuts done by the salon's assistants, and has thrown in a $35 blow-dry (normally $50) for the duration of this deal. Offer not valid on weekends.

A trip to the **Helena Rubinstein Beauty Gallery** will earn you a 30-minute pedicure with one of its much-in-demand miracle-workers. While you're there, check out the new "Art of Spa" mind-and-body treatments like the 60-minute Relaxing Body Ritual ($130).



And *this* little piggy . . . At the Helena Rubinstein Spa.

Karen Wu is offering its special pedicure-and-Chinese-acupressure treatment, so once the polishing's done, you can expect some massaging to complete the job. Choose from a wide variety of treatments for further Eastern-inspired indulgence. *Away Spa & Gym, 541 Lexington Ave., at 49th St., fourth floor (212-407-2970); D.esse Spa, 350 Hudson St. (212-206-1655); Antonio Prieto Salon, 25 W. 19th St. (212-255-3741); Helena Rubinstein Beauty Gallery, 135 Spring St. (212-343-9963); Karen Wu, 1044 Madison Ave., near 80th St., second floor (212-737-3545), and 1377 Third Ave., near 78th St. (212-585-2044).*

Picks of the Week

Diesel's ever-edgy jeans, jackets, leather, and more will be available at its sample sale this week. *261 W. 36th St., second floor (212-947-8748); A.E., M.C., V., cash; Mon., Wed., Fri. 10-6, Tues., Thurs. till 7, Sat. till 4; 4/13-4/19.*

Roberta Chiarella's Swarovski Austrian-crystal creations—including jewelry and belts—will be reduced by 50 to 75 percent at the sample sale. *Plaza Fifty Hotel, 155 E. 50th St. (212-751-5710); cash only; 4/11, 10-7.*

S. Feldman Housewares is discounting its stock of all-clad master-chef kitchenware by up to 40 percent. *1304 Madison Ave., near 92nd St. (212-289-7367); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sat. 9-6, Sun. 11-5; Through 4/30.*

Tahari is hosting a sample and stock sale featuring 7,000 sophisticated pieces from its spring collection at prices below wholesale. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., at 40th St. (877-579-0222); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Wed. 8-6:30, Thurs. till 7; 4/9-4/12.*

TriBeCa Potters is having its eleventh annual seconds sale, featuring ceramic work at prices well below regular retail. *443 Greenwich St., second floor (212-431-7631); all major credit cards; daily 11-6; 4/6-4/15.*

Union Square Optical's annual anniversary sale is offering its entire inventory of swank eyeglasses at 50 percent off original prices. *9 W. 14th St. (212-242-0314); A.E., M.C., V., cash; Mon.-Sat. 10-7:30, Sun. noon-5; 4/9-4/21.* ■

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Photograph by Lenora Gim.

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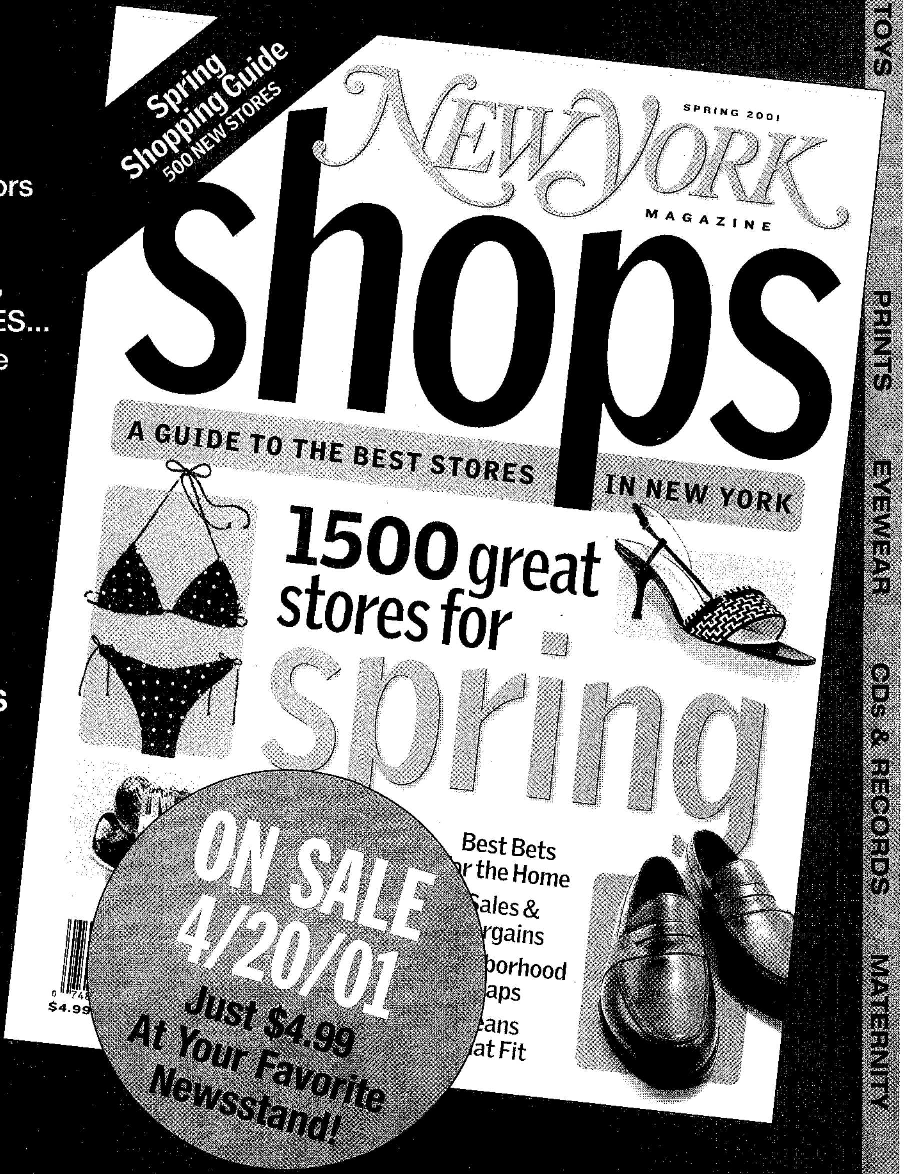
Spring Shopping Guide
500 NEW STORES
SPRING 2001
NEW YORK
MAGAZINE
Shops
A GUIDE TO THE BEST STORES IN NEW YORK
1500 great stores for spring
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Feel the Burn Rate

If you already broke your New Year's resolution to go to the gym, stay home with this year's revolutions in home fitness.

POLAR
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Phat Control

If you're not dragging your abs to the gym as often as you swore you would, the city's best sources for in-home motivation are OmniFitness (multiple metro-area locations, including the newest store, 830 Broadway, near 12th Street; 212-260-8537) and Gym Source (40 East 52nd Street; 212-688-4222). Both have Websites (omnifitness.com, gymsource.com) that detail the full range of treadmills, stationary bikes, and other exercise equipment they carry, which, including delivery and setup, can run into the thousands (motivated yet?). For the less ambitious, both stores offer compact equipment (dumbbells, free weights, jump ropes) and one must-have accessory: an electronic body-fat analyzer. These handheld devices—such as the Omron Body Logic 301 ($99, both stores)—send a fat-detecting electrical charge (which you can't feel) through your body. Within seconds, you'll know if you should quit the Krispy Kremes and climb back on the treadmill.

% FAT / HGT
FAT MASS / WT
AGE
On/Off
Start
Set
omron
BODY FAT ANALYZER HBF-301

Watch It

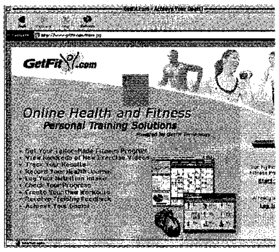
To figure out whether your cardio workout is intense enough (or *too* intense), you've got to keep track of your heart rate—either through manual pulse-taking or a chest-strap device that broadcasts to a receiver. The new Polar S510 ($240, polarusa.com) trumps both options, not only collecting data—including recovery heart rare, caloric expenditure, cycling distance and speed—but also sharing it with your PC via infrared. The Mio Fitness Watch ($119.95, shoplifestyle.com) takes a more streamlined approach to data-mining, collecting less information but dispensing with the chest strap: You check your pulse by holding two fingers on the triangular sensors.

Step Lively

The Mini Step and Flex ($99.95, Sharper Image, 4 West 57th Street; 212-265-2550) is a step above other compact stair machines: It has a digital display that tracks elapsed time and steps taken, plus bungee-cord-like resistance bands that allow you to work your upper body as you climb your way to buffness. It's sturdy for such a diminutive unit—25 pounds of solid powder-coated steel that can slide under a bed—and very effective: Thanks to a fourteen-inch range of motion and the preset resistance of built-in shocks, you can work up a sweat before reaching the virtual tenth floor.

Site Specific

At least until ubiquitous high-speed access lets us sign up for online Pilates, it seems odd to get in shape on the Internet. After all, it's just a high-tech excuse for sitting on our butts all day. But at least a few fitness sites use interactivity to foster old-fashioned activity. Workoutplan.com creates customized exercise programs by setting goals and training schedules for every day of the week. It lacks the motivating force of a personal trainer pushing for one last rep, but it's free. (Getfit.com offers similar services in a glossier package for $96 a year.) If you want to calculate exactly how much exercise helps, Shape Up America (shapeup.org/fitness/assess/fset2.htm) offers a fitness assessment with take-at-home tests to measure flexibility, muscular strength, and aerobic fitness. Efit.com even tells you exactly how many calories you burn running, having sex, and—oddly—praying. Just don't count on that last one alone. ■


GetFit.com

Online Health and Fitness

Personal Training Solutions

Photographed by Eric Piasecki.

SUMMER

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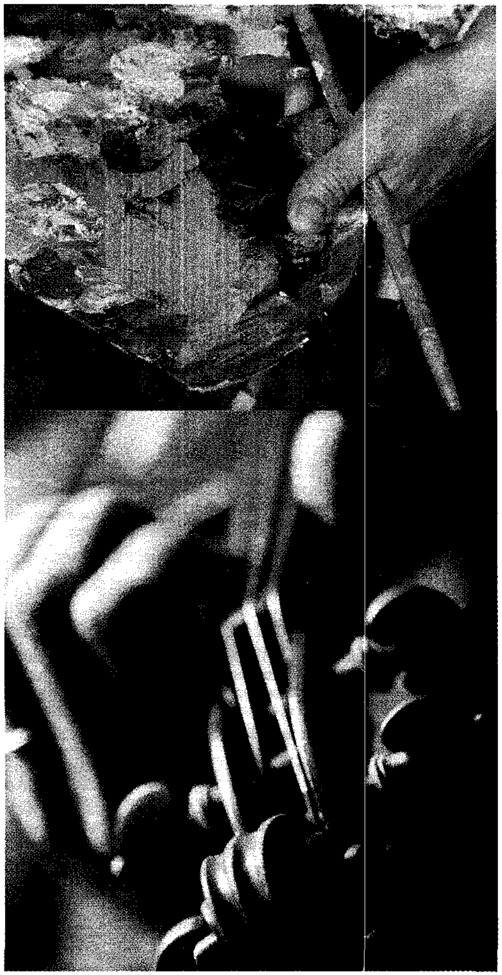
Summer School Rules

With the worlds of technology and finance operating at lightning speed, and other aspects of business not much easier to follow, education is an open-ended, ever-stimulating fact of life. And now you can pursue your professional and personal interests on your own schedule – full-time, part-time, days, evenings, weekends. Or drop in anytime on the Internet. Make a career move or just study something for the fun of it. We've done the legwork, and offer you these hot tips for summer school, New York-style.

The New School

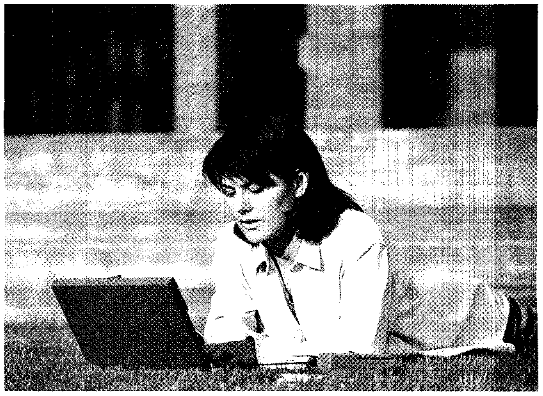
The encyclopedic offerings at The New School provide the means to advance your career, pick up a new skill, or study anything that's always fascinated you. Choose among 500 courses on such subjects as business and career education, writing, humanities, culinary arts, foreign languages, music, recreation and physical fitness, computer science, communications, photography, and fine arts. There are five degree and 11 certificate programs.



"Summer is a great time to turn your attention to starting something new or renewing old interests," says Elissa Tenny, acting dean. "And you can take courses online anytime from anywhere in the world. So whether you're preparing for a career move in the fall, or just want to experiment with landscape painting, The New School can give you something to remember this summer."

The Career Center teaches practical skills to advance or change careers. The Computer Instruction Center offers three certificate programs, including Web page design. And new this year is the Graduate Program in International Affairs, directed by former World Bank senior advisor Michael Cohen, offering two master's degrees and internships in a developing country institution, government, or organization.

And then there is the cornucopia of timely courses. Explore such issues of the day as "Recent Controversial Issues Before the Supreme Court." Straighten out your finances with "Mindful Money." Brush up your French or Italian in a one-day workshop for travelers (a perfect companion for the "Traveling Solo" course). Work your body in fitness classes—from ballroom dancing to "The Art of Boxing." Or get in tune with jazz and blues classes.



The Writing Program, which has been churning up talent since 1931, covers the field from fundamentals to a Master's in Fine Arts degree with concentrations in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and writing for children. Since it is summer, there are outdoor courses, like "Drawing and Painting New York On-Site," "Summer Bird-watching on Jamaica Bay," and a course in saltwater fly-fishing that concludes with a fishing trip on Long Island Sound. Spend nine weeks "Observing the Night Sky." Then there's the week-long Toscana Photographic Workshop in Italy, and a culinary arts course that meets with chefs and staff at some of the great restaurants of New York (Petrossian, La Caravelle, and Beacon). Courses range from one-day workshops to complete degree programs, in classroom sessions or online through The New School's Online University.

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New School University
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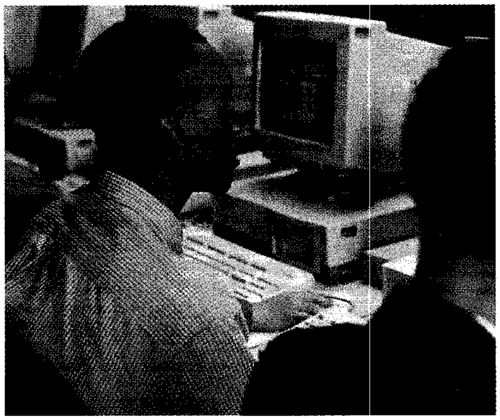
The New School

New York University

"Lifelong learning isn't an indulgence–it's a necessity," says David Finney, dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies at New York University. "The impact of rapidly evolving technology dictates that we respond to the challenge of change by constantly upgrading our job skills and intellectual knowledge."

New Yorkers and newcomers alike can experience the city in unique ways through challenging courses that engage New York itself in the learning process. Types of courses include: field studies of painting and sculpture, with lectures preceding museum visits; a search for the city in the journalism produced in and about New York during the last two centuries; an exploration by walking tours, and visits to museums, theaters, and concert halls to seek out the living definitions of the city's urban culture.

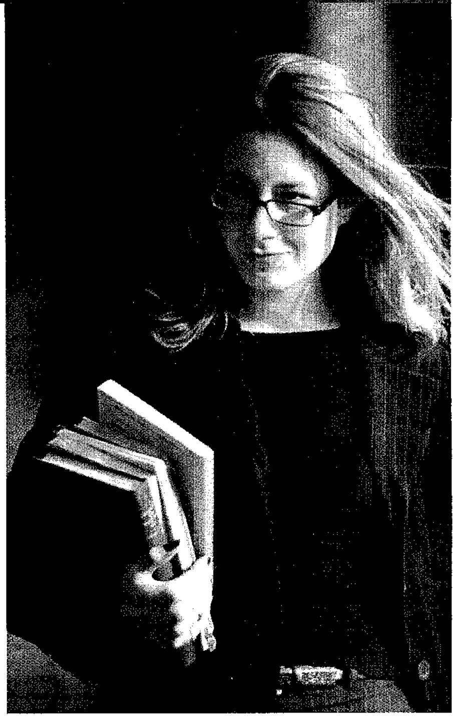
NYU also helps prepare students for college life as they finish high school, and to prepare for life after they've graduated. NYU Precollege begins with discussions of the college application and enrollment process, followed by completing one college-level course in the arts, humanities, social science, or natural science. The Stern Advantage Program teaches practical business skills students need as they enter the business world – such subjects as finance and accounting, marketing, business communications, and information systems and technology.



The Virtual College™ at NYU turns cyberspace into classrooms that offer everything from individual courses to complete graduate programs available online – ranging from noncredit options, two graduate programs, a 36-credit Master of Science degree in Management and Systems, and a 16-credit Advanced Professional Certificate in Information Technology.

NYU's Paralegal Diploma Program, approved by the American Bar Association, teaches traditional, library-based research, drawing on both NYU's School of Law library and the online WESLAW database.

Busy working professionals make good use of the NYU's Weekend Intensive programs, studying career-boosters (or changers) like the business of real estate, starting a small business, television news production, and foreign language courses that teach Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Spanish, and Turkish. Once you've got the language down, you can take advantage of study abroad programs that offer courses in 19 countries ranging in subject matter from acting and communication studies, to music, psychology, and politics – the arts in Paris, film editing in Vienna, studio art in Venice, developmental psychology in Geneva.



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"This is an Ivy League college for serious returning and nontraditional students," says Peter J. Awn, dean of General Studies. "The program is intellectually demanding and highly structured, yet flexible enough to fit the complex schedules of working students."

Columbia's School of General Studies offers a completely paperless course, created in cooperation with the Columbia Center for New media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL). There are no books, course packets, or paper submissions of research and writing projects. Final projects are produced with the aid of the CU Analyzer, developed by CCNMTL – a digital collection tool that allows you to cull text, images, and both audio and video samples to include in the finished paperless presentation.

Columbia University School of General Studies
Broadway at 116th Street;
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www.gs.columbia.edu

Columbia's Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program

College graduates interested in a career in medicine – but have taken none or only some of the basic science courses required for admission to medical school – use Columbia's Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program to build a strong foundation in the physical and biological sciences while studying with faculty actively engaged in research.

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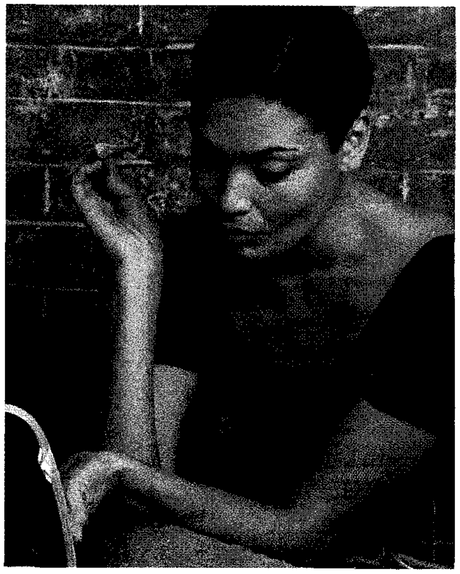
Broadway at 116th Street;
1-888-853-6340; www.gs.columbia.edu

Columbia's Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs



College graduates can continue their studies through Columbia's Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs which offers courses in 34 areas of the arts and sciences – topics including "The American Presidency," "The History and Political Development of the European Union," and "Latin American Humanities." And there are ample opportunities for study abroad – in Beijing, Paris, Berlin, and Scandiano, Italy. In July, students from all over the world will converge on Columbia to take part in the Summer Program for high school students.

Columbia's Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs
854-9699, www.ce.columbia.edu

New York School of Interior Design

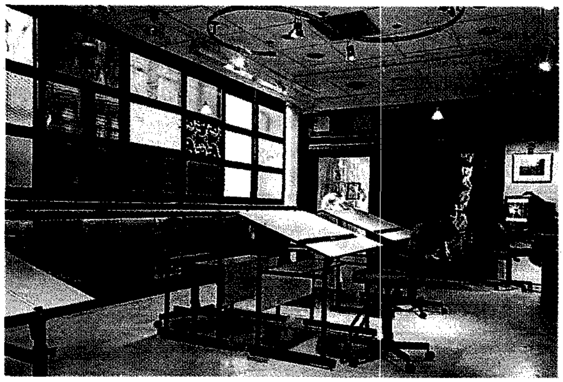


Photo: Durstan Saylor

Lighting Lab

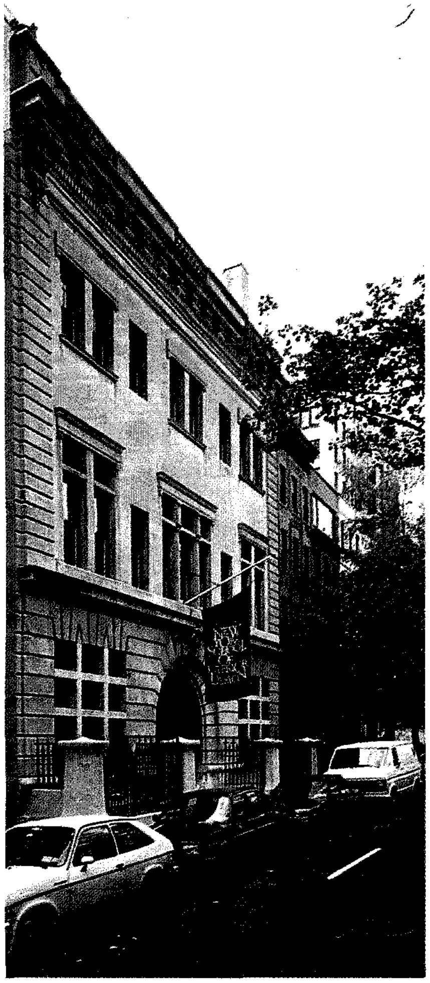
Set in the midst of the Upper East Side Historic District – with the Whitney, Met, Frick, and Guggenheim museums for neighbors, the New York School of Interior Design is surrounded by resources that fit perfectly with its mission as New York's only private, not-for-profit college specializing solely in interior design.

NYSID's landmark Beaux Arts building boasts light-filled studios and library, the latest computer-aided design technology, a state-of-the-art lighting laboratory, and a large atelier for independent work. Established design professionals form the faculty, providing students with insights and access to the field.

This summer, while NYSID celebrates it's 85th anniversary, you can take advantage of workshops that will help you prepare for career design, or teach you professional-level artistic skills.

The intensive two-week Career Discovery Workshop includes lectures, an individually tutored design studio, drafting, computer-aided design demonstrations, and field trips. Introduction to Interior Design is a broad introduction to the field, with discussions of topics that include basic design elements, space planning, furnishings and resources. And there's a workshop for practicing interior designers and architects that covers the current CAD technology, and includes plenty of hands-on experience.

New York School of
Interior Design
170 E. 70th St., 472-1500;
www.nysid.edu



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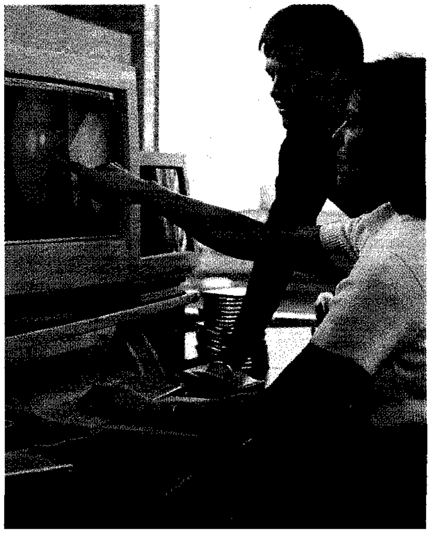

Lincoln Center Campus

Fordham University

The summer session at Fordham University offers a wide range of core curriculum courses, as well as fascinating electives, and exciting special programs – all suited to catching up or getting ahead in your studies.

In true Jesuit tradition, distinguished professors offer plenty of personal attention in small class groups, with rigorous, open debate part of the learning experience.

You have a choice of over 200 graduate and undergraduate courses, available morning, afternoon, and evening. And a choice of two campuses, one next to Lincoln Center, the other, 85 acres of rolling lawns and tree-lined walkways in the north Bronx. The Ram Van shuttle bus connects the two throughout the day.

Special programs this summer include an interesting pair of two-week workshops. The course in business communications applications teaches workplace skills using simulated business experience to prepare participants for real-world situations. And for something completely different, there's the popular course in sports communication that covers both print and electronic media, concentrating on techniques in sports writing, public relations, marketing, and advertising – with guest speakers and field trips to local newsrooms and broadcast studios.

There's more hands-on experience to be gained in credit-bearing internship seminars in the fields of sociology, anthropology, interdisciplinary social science, and communications and media studies.

Fordham's 10n-week graduate program in emerging markets and political risk analysis (the only one of its kind in New York City) surveys different financial and managerial structures, structuring the firm, running the firm successfully, and if all else fails, bankruptcy.

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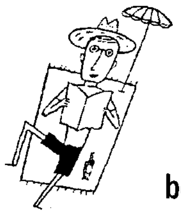

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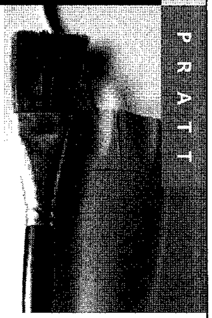

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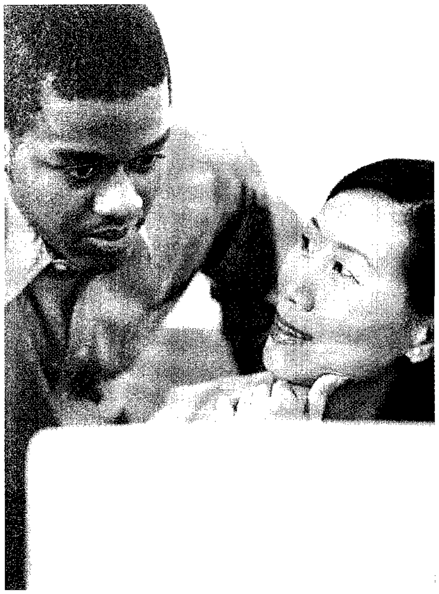

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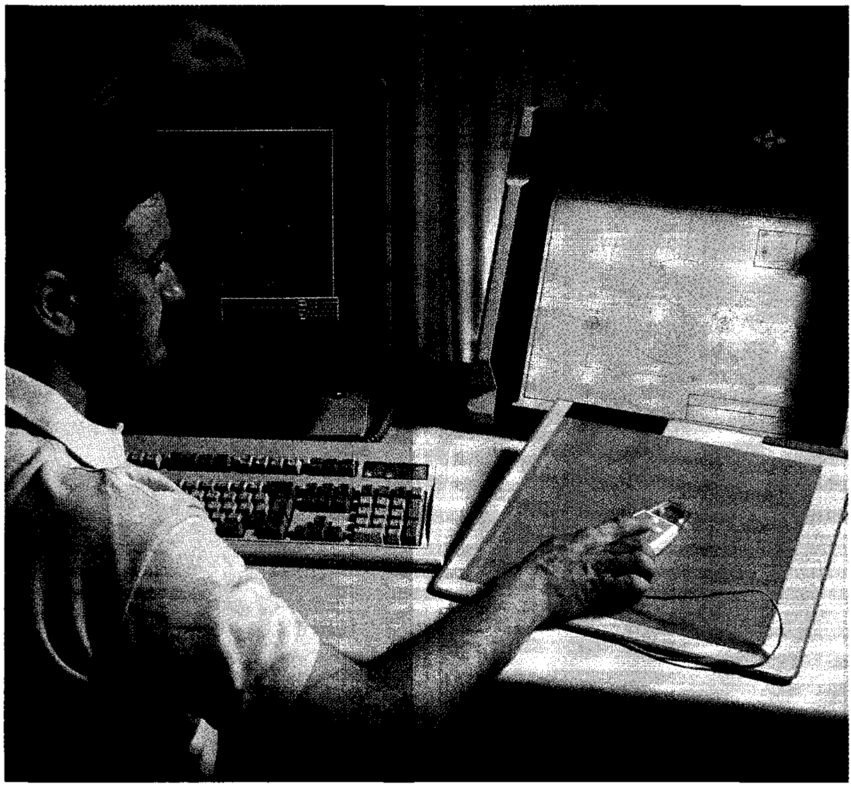

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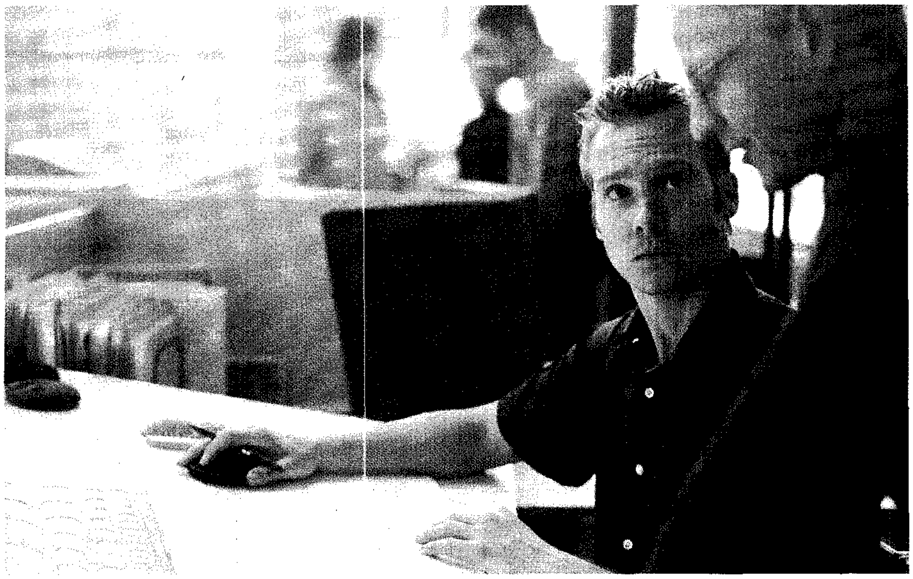
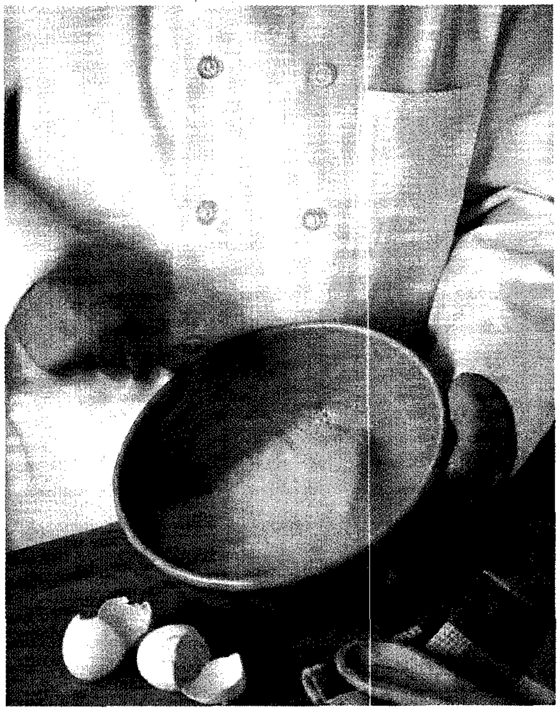
The Institute of Classical Architecture provides a unique opportunity for professionals, students, and the general public to study the classical traditions as they apply to architecture. Through The Institute's Continuing Education courses, architects, interior designers, urban planners, and theatrical stage designers learn how to draw, identify, render, and design with the elements of the classical vocabulary, as well as learning the historical and theoretical tenets on which the classical tradition is founded. All courses qualify for AIA/CES learning units. The six-week intensive Summer Program provides in-depth instruction that addresses the specific interests of the practitioner and student – proportion, craftsmanship, literature and theory, and studio design. This summer, the Brooklyn Waterfront Park will serve as the design studio. Looking forward to fall, the annual Architectural Drawing Tour in Rome provides instruction in classical Roman architecture through examination, analysis, and drawing.



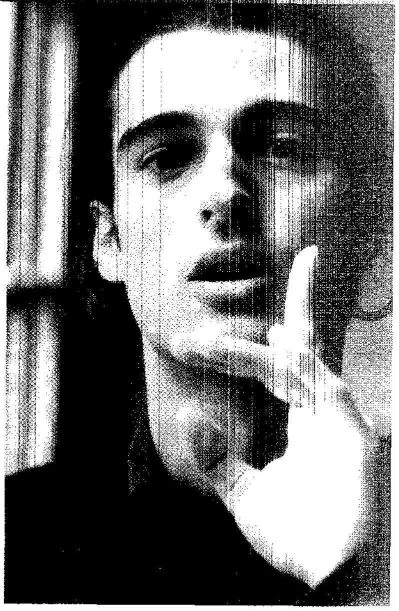
The Institute of Classical Architecture
225 Lafayette St., 917-237-1208;
www.classicist.org

Peter Kump's New York Cooking School



Well known for its career training programs for aspiring chefs, this summer Peter Kump's New York Cooking School also has over 150 courses for the general public. At least 40 of these are two- to five-day "intensive" courses. Classes are hands-on, full participation programs limited to 13 people, with daytime, evening, and weekend schedules. Popular courses include fine cooking, bread baking, chocolate, pastry and baking, fish and shellfish, and Italian, Asian, and Thai cooking. New this summer are two-day workshops in flavor development and Indian cooking, as well as a four-day cooking course for young teens. There are also dozens of single-session classes that spotlight such specialties as classic paella, shortcakes and cobblers, grill and salad meals, Neapolitan fish cookery, and quick and easy Thai cooking.

Peter Kump's New York Cooking School
50 W. 23rd St., 847-0770;
www.newyorkculinary.com



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NEW YORK

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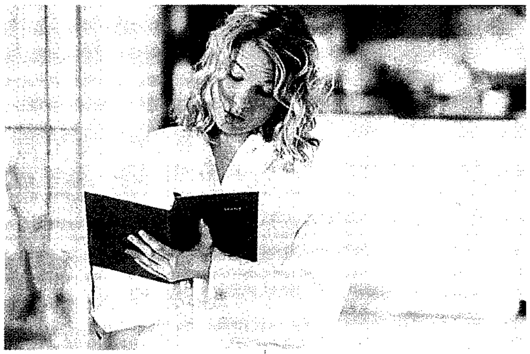
A Weekly Guide to Culture and Upcoming Events

Edited by Christopher Bonanos



Movies

Bridget Jones's Diary

Opens April 13

It's probably not a great first-date movie—too many squirm-inducing moments for both sexes—but for a girls'-night-out brigade, it's a v. good thing. Renée Zellweger (pictured) stars alongside Hugh Grant and Colin Firth. (See page 80.)

Theater

Best of the Week

King Hedley II

At the Virginia Theatre

It's back to serious roles for Brian Stokes Mitchell, fresh off his Tony for *Kiss Me, Kate.* August Wilson's drama, the latest in his decade-by-decade series about black America, is set in 1985 Pittsburgh. In previews for an April 29 opening. (See listing, page 84.)

Restaurants

Greek Easter Dinner

At Avra and Molyvos

Every few years, the Western and Greek Orthodox Easters fall on the same Sunday. Hence these specials at two of midtown's top Greek restaurants this weekend. Avra's kitchen will take over the patio to spit-roast lamb (and draw every diner within smelling distance). At Molyvos, it's Carnivore Fest '01: more lamb, Cypriot sausage, sweetbreads, and magiritsa, the don't-ask-what's-in-it-just-taste Easter soup. (See listings for phone and address information, pages 99 and 100.)

Art

Tibet: Mountains and Valleys, Castles and Tents

At the PaineWebber Art Gallery

Odd but true fact: The Newark Museum has what might be the West's best collection of Tibetan art. And for New Yorkers who'd sooner go to Lhasa than get on a PATH train, the best of the collection—silver and teapots, prayer wheels and mantra scrolls—comes to midtown starting April 12. (See listing, page 90.)

Nightlife

J Mascis

At Wetlands

His band was named Dinosaur Jr., and grunge does have a whiff of the Jurassic about it these days, but J Mascis (pictured) is far from extinct—and will have fans for as long as there are garage bands. Expect a crowd of 29-year-old goateed Web developers who know every muddy chord. (See listing, page 102.)

In Concert

Mozart's *Requiem*

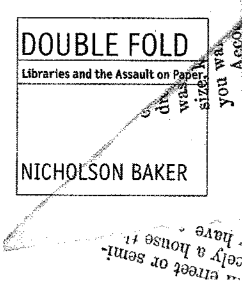
At Avery Fisher Hall

Commissioned anonymously and unfinished at the composer's death, Mozart's final work has always carried a whiff of mystique. The National Chorale performs the *Requiem* on Good Friday. (See listing, page 109.)

Books

Double Fold

By Nicholson Baker; Random House; $25.95



In the name of microfilm and modernity, says Nicholson Baker, America's libraries may have destroyed much of our history. The novelist known for obsessive examinations of the commonplace—and, perhaps not paradoxically, for the infamous phone-sex novel *Vox*—puts on his reporter's hat and lets out a roar no librarian will be able to shush. In bookstores April 13.

Photographs: clockwise from bottom right, Joan Marcus; Alex Bailey; Brooke Williams.

The White Stuff

Ted Demme's *Blow* doesn't quite have the courage of its anti-drug convictions; Morgan Freeman's Alex Cross, in *Along Came a Spider,* is a different kind of wasted.

Blow, STARRING JOHNNY DEPP as the real-life cocaine-trafficker and junkie George Jung, has the trajectory of virtually every drug-themed movie ever made: down, down, and down. The early highs are a mere prelude to the inevitable FBI stings, ODs, mad rants, prison. Our hero's sparkling eyes will inevitably glass over; his sneer will go slack. Drug movies are a subset of crime films, which long ago gave up the convention that crime does not pay. (The new convention is that, at least sometimes, it does indeed.) Drug movies, however, still operate in a puritanical universe where the druggies and the dealers must finally be brought low. Since drug usage, at least in its early stages, is often paired in the movies with oodles of cash and wanton sex, it is imperative to right the balance by the end. Brian De Palma's *Scarface,* with Al Pacino dunking his thick noggin in high drifts of coke, remains the quintessential example of this genre; it has a revved-up, almost operatic moralism. The message of the movie seems to be: Crime does not pay *and how.*

Blow
Directed by Ted Demme; starring Johnny Depp.

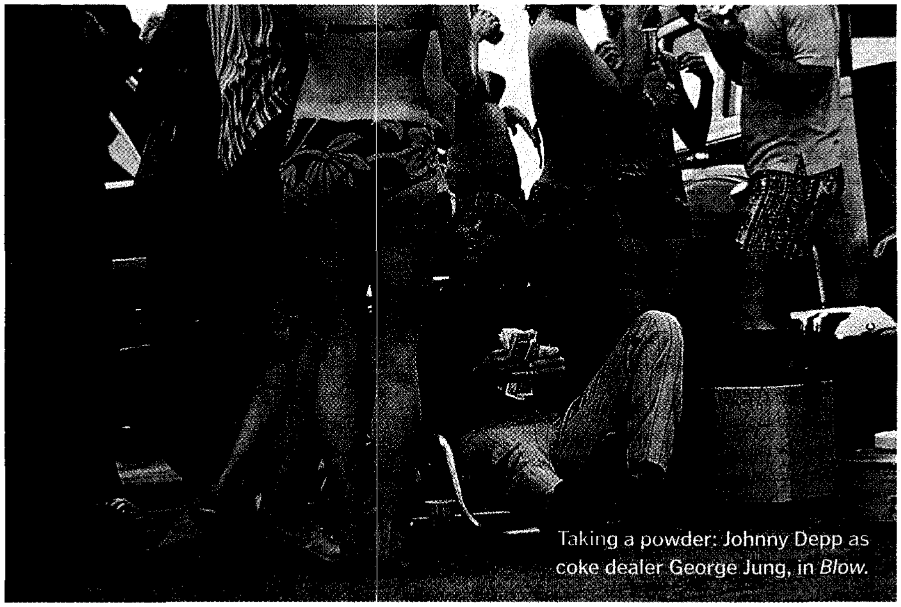
Along Came a Spider
Starring Morgan Freeman.
See Movies listings for details.

The balancing act in druggie movies has always been delicate: How do you show the highs without appearing to endorse them? *Traffic* managed this act pretty well. The scenes of the high-school kids freebasing crack had a creepy, woozy euphoria; you could see what the attraction was even if you knew in your bones what was ahead. In its early sections, set in Manhattan Beach in the late sixties when George, still in his twenties, is becoming a pot-dealing entrepreneur, *Blow* has an ominous casualness that captures the self-styled counterculture spirit of gonzo capitalism. George has retreated from his Boston roots to the West Coast and become a beachfront tycoon in a tie-dyed universe of stewardesses and shag-haired dopers. His parents, played by Ray Liotta and Rachel Griffiths, are portrayed as lower-middle-class clock-punchers, and George makes it clear he doesn't want to end up like them. (Liotta in real life is eight years older than Depp, and Griffiths is five years younger—so much for age-specific casting.)

George's father delivers up homespun tidbits designed to bring the boy around. "Money isn't real," he says. "It doesn't matter, it only seems like it does." Sure enough, George becomes the main U.S. connection for the Colombian coke trade and makes so much moolah that he literally can't find the room to store it all. And, yes, it doesn't matter in the end. What matters for George is getting straight and gaining back the love of his father and the young daughter who believes he betrayed her.

Ted Demme, who directed from a script by David McKenna and Nick Cassavetes from the book by Bruce Porter, invents or embellishes those aspects of George's life that would make him more sympathetic, less cold-blooded. And so, early on, he is given a girlfriend (Franka Potente, of *Run Lola Run*) who dies tragically, and whose loss he never gets over. When George eventually marries, it is to a Colombian-drug-world moll (Penélope Cruz) with glitterati taste and brass lungs. The filmmakers want to portray George as a hurt puppy inside the dopester wheeler-dealer, and up to a point Johnny Depp obliges; if you eliminate his golden-boy tresses and wraparound shades, you see a stoner in pain. But Depp doesn't overdo the agonies; he doesn't overdo much of anything, actually. He offers up instead a beautiful, unreadable vacancy, and this doesn't do much for the movie when George is reduced to wailing and mumbling. A cipher in misery is still a cipher. Depp's hip hollowness doesn't leave much for us to hang on to.

Blow feels like a fantasia on the theme of drug-dealing. Although George is a kingpin with the Feds on his tail and a million enemies, he seems to traipse about pretty much without bodyguards. The drug trade comes readily to him, as if by magic. The filmmakers are torn between presenting George's life story as a


Taking a powder: Johnny Depp as coke dealer George Jung, in *Blow.*

Photograph by Lorey Sebastian/New Line Cinema.

cautionary tale, or as a blast. The cautionary material—the homilies and retributions and the unforgiving daughter—comes across as old-school stuff. Demme doesn't appear to have his heart in all this; it's in the movie to earn a mainstream seal of approval and absolve the filmmakers from the charge of glorifying drugs. *Blow* doesn't glorify drug usage, exactly, but it does something vaguely similar: It downplays the effects of George's drug trafficking, not so much on himself and his cronies as on the wrecked lives of the generation of customers we never get to see. George comes across as a bizarro version of the all-American boy who scores the American Dream. We are made to feel that if only he hadn't gotten greedy, or snow-blind, he might have avoided the prison sentence that will keep him in stir until 2014. The people who made *Blow* are so much more attuned to George's high-style successes than to his downfall that the film inadvertently seems to be saying: If you deal, keep your head on straight.

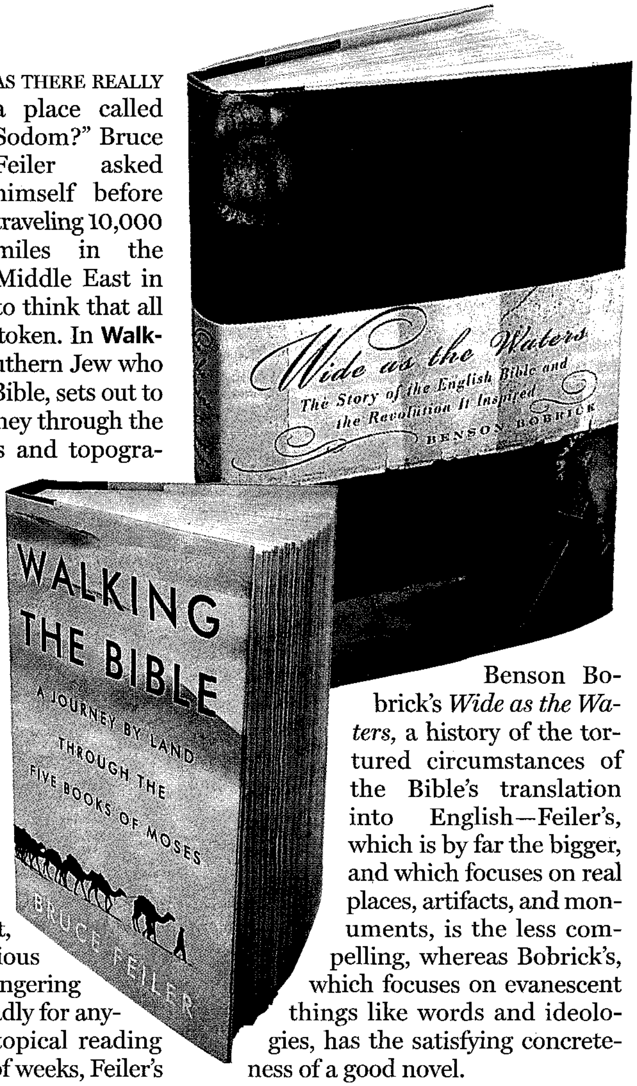
IN **Along Came a Spider**, MORGAN Freeman reprises his role from *Kiss the Girls* as criminal profiler Alex Cross. Aside from the fact that that 1997 film was a hit, it's not clear why Freeman would want to once again indulge this character (the hero of the Alex Cross series of detective novels by James Patterson). There's not much here for a great actor to sink his teeth into once, let alone twice, but, on the other hand, there aren't many African-American sleuths in the movies, either. And who better than Freeman to bring Cross's courtly ruminations to the screen? Even at half speed, Freeman excels: He knows how to whip out his badge at a crime scene and make it seem as if he had been doing it his whole life. In *Along Came a Spider*, Cross is tracking a crazily ambitious kidnapper (Michael Wincott) with the help of a flustered Secret Service agent (Monica Potter), and although Lee Tamahori's direction is foot-draggy, there are enough twists in the plot to keep the audience happily bamboozled. But if Freeman reprises this role again, he'd be well advised to have the script spiffed up first. To hear him wrap his sonorous voice around a line like "I just get the feeling we're missing something" is to be reminded once again why certain actors deserve their mega-salaries and then some. ■

BOOKS DANIEL MENDELSOHN

Holy Shtick

A search for the historical Bible yields little; but the making of the King James Version is one of the greatest stories ever told.

'WAS THERE REALLY a place called Sodom?" Bruce Feiler asked himself before traveling 10,000 miles in the Middle East in search of the Bible. And to think that all he needed was a subway token. In **Walking the Bible**, Feiler, a southern Jew who felt "separated" from the Bible, sets out to show how a physical journey through the modern-day geographies and topographies mentioned in the first five books of the Old Testament became a metaphorical journey to belief. (The combination of travel writing and religious writing may look odd, but when you think about it, the two actually have a lot in common: In both cases, after all, the author has to persuade his audience that the wonders he's witnessed are real.) I've been eager to read Feiler's book ever since I first heard about it, since like many nonreligious people I harbor a secret, lingering desire to be persuaded. Sadly for anyone who wanted some topical reading during this most biblical of weeks, Feiler's repetitive, amateurish book takes you through what often feels like 40 years in a narrative desert, without ever delivering you to the promised land. Ironically, of the two books about the Bible being published right now—the other is Benson Bobrick's *Wide as the Waters*, a history of the tortured circumstances of the Bible's translation into English—Feiler's, which is by far the bigger, and which focuses on real places, artifacts, and monuments, is the less compelling, whereas Bobrick's, which focuses on evanescent things like words and ideologies, has the satisfying concreteness of a good novel.


Wide as the Waters
The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired
BENSON BOBRICK
WALKING THE BIBLE
A JOURNEY BY LAND THROUGH THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES
BRUCE FEILER

Walking The Bible:
A Journey By Land Through the Five Books of Moses
By Bruce Feiler.
William Morrow. 451 pages; $26.

Wide As The Waters:
The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired
By Benson Bobrick
Simon & Schuster. 379 pages; $26.

It's not hard to see why Feiler thought that traveling through the places where the Pentateuch is set—Turkey, Egypt, Israel, Jordan; the Nile Valley, the Sinai peninsula, the stone city of Petra; the Dome of the Rock, Orthodox monasteries, Jewish holy places—would bring him closer to God: He's the author of a number of books, on everything from Japan to circuses to country music, in which the narrative is driven by a sense of place. To his credit, many of the places he encounters during his arduous journey are vividly described.

Continued on page 108

Photograph by Joe Scafuro.

Follies Go Litely

Even a lightweight production of the Sondheim classic is worth seeing; *Stones in His Pockets* won't weigh you down; *The Book of Liz* should be shut.

When Stephen Sondheim's **Follies** arrived in 1971, we critics were pretty obtuse about it. It now emerges as one of our finest musicals and should be on the top-ten list of even those people who, like me, don't believe in list-making.

That original production had the benefit of Harold Prince and Michael Bennett's co-direction and the latter's choreography, of Florence Klotz's eye-popping costumes, and Boris Aronson's magnificent ruin of a set. And, of course, 22 Sondheim songs, each worthy of a musical-comedy hall of fame, if such a thing existed. They stand up even in the crippled current revival of the Roundabout production.

You may have seen the Paper Mill Playhouse revival of 1998, which was appreciably better but because of some ugly behind-the-scenes politics did not make it to Broadway. That need not stop you from seeing this one; *Follies* has enough life to survive even in a half-alive revival.

Hooray for *Follies*wood: The Loveland scene from *Follies.*

The first problem with this mounting is its lack of opulence. Yes, costs have skyrocketed, but the Paper Mill surmounted that hurdle. A show about a fabulous party given by a Ziegfeld-like producer in his about-to-be-demolished theater, reuniting surviving cast members from all his shows one last time—not to mention the ghosts of showgirls past and the incarnate memories of some of these performers' younger selves—has to be lavish. And beyond the glitter of opulence, it must also glow with the burnish of remembrance, light up with the luster of nostalgia. Mark Thompson's décor is serviceable, Hugh Vanstone's lighting better than that, and the veteran Theoni V. Aldredge's costuming honorable. Still, lacking is some of the glory that was greasepaint, some of the grandeur that was roaming down memory lane.

Follies
At the Belasco Theatre.

Stones in His Pockets
At the Golden Theatre.

The Book of Liz
At the Greenwich House Theatre.

Passion Play
At the Minetta Lane Theatre. See Theater listings for details.

The cast has its sparklers. The part of the sophisticated Phyllis, twice indelibly incarnated in the beauty and talent of Alexis Smith and Lee Remick, has a condign incumbent in Blythe Danner; if her voice has its limitations, her acting and loveliness have none. No less impressive are Polly Bergen, as the ultimate survivor, Carlotta, whose anthem to durability, "I'm Still Here," ranks with the best; and Joan Roberts, the original Laurey from *Oklahoma!*, as an endearingly enduring Heidi. There are winning contributions by other beloved old-timers: Betty Garrett, Donald Saddler, Marge Champion, and Louis Zorich.

But Matthew Warchus has never directed musicals, and it shows: He does not trust the power of a great song delivered with absolute simplicity. As a director of plays, he believes that everything needs to be acted. So he casts the fine actress Judith Ivey as Sally and obliges her to act out redundantly "Losing My Mind" with distracting superimposed histrionics. He has similarly undercut Miss Danner's "The Story of Lucy and Jessie" with supererogatory gestures. And because Treat Williams is not a dancer, he has made him instead run around kicking over chairs during "The Right Girl," undermining his singing and distorting his characterization.

He has also made some poor casting choices. That Gregory Harrison played a similar part badly in *Steel Pier* is no reason to let him louse up Ben with his charmlessness. To cast Lauren Ward as anything but an ugly duckling is a mistake; to cast her as Young Sally, a catastrophe. Even the tiny role of Kevin could profit from someone more appealing than Stephen Campanella.

But Warchus's chief failings are not knowing where to place singers for optimum efficacy and not even exploiting the

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

full potential of the scenery. And allowing the mediocre Kathleen Marshall to come up with even less than her customary choreography.

For all that, it would be folly to pass up the indestructible *Follies.* From every one of its splendidly orchestrated songs (by Jonathan Tunick), Stephen Sondheim proclaims "I'm Still Here," while James Goldman's far from flawless book nevertheless captures the ability of theater to make us—with art or artifice, truth or trickery—however briefly, partakers of immortality.

MARIE JONES'S **Stones in His Pockets** IS one of those gimmicky plays in which two actors play fifteen parts. It concerns an American company's filming a probably awful superproduction in a tiny Irish town. The principal characters are two youngish layabouts, Charlie Conlon and Jake Quinn, making easy but ephemeral money as extras. The leading lady, Caroline Giovanni, is a third-generation-Irish Hollywood star trying to improve her Irish accent by fraternizing with Jake; Charlie is trying to peddle his wretched screenplay to the film folk. A young, unstable lad, not hired as an extra, commits suicide. The extras, who include nearly the entire population, wish to attend and get drunk at the funeral, which, like the weather, threatens the tight production schedule.

From these elements, Miss Jones, herself an actress as well as playwright, and who has had like experiences, has constructed a not unamusing but inconsequential comedy. The satire on Hollywood filmmaking—which includes an insensitive director, a tyrannical assistant director, an ambitious young female second A.D., and the randy Caroline—is old news, as are the carryings-on of the County Kerry rustics. The chief interest lies in watching two agile actors slip in and out of sundry parts with speed and mastery, but that is still only a stunt. If the play had as many actors as parts, it would be indistinguishable from the standard small-scale Irish movie. The only new note in the dialogue is the reference to Seamus Heaney, improbable as that incident is.

Watching Seán Campion and Conleth Hill go through their comic routines, well directed by Ian McElhinney, is robust fun. Jack Kirwan has designed a cloudy-sky backdrop and lined the back of the stage with a row of odd footgear. If such simple pleasures do not satisfy you, rough shoes.

A NOT DISSIMILAR BUT MORE SOPHOMORIC entertainment is the Drama Dept. mounting of **The Book of Liz**, by David and Amy Sedaris, who, somewhat overoptimistically, call themselves the Talent Family. It is a spoof on an Amish-like cult, the Squeamish, from which a female member escapes and, after spending a day in a peanut costume, lands a job in an eatery with a Pilgrim theme, the Plymouth Crock Family restaurant.

This anti-heroine, Sister Elizabeth Donderstock, has two salient characteristics: She sweats uncontrollably and she makes the best-selling cheese balls. How these traits are related should pose no serious problem for connoisseurs of Talent Family gross-outs. Four actors play fifteen different parts, which makes them half as versatile as the Irish duo; the two men here, Chuck Coggins and David Rakoff, are downright poor. The women, Amy Sedaris (Liz) and the overloud but able Jackie Hoffman, are fine. Hugh Hamrick's farcical sets are superior to his staging.

PETER NICHOLS'S **Passion Play** IS ABOUT THE ostensibly happy 25-year marriage of James, an art restorer, and Eleanor, a singing teacher and chorister, which suffers when James is seduced by Kate, his and Eleanor's man-eating young friend, a photographer. It is Kate who broke up the marriage of the just-deceased Albert, an old friend of James's, to Agnes, who reveals to Eleanor that Kate has her hooks into James. Two other characters, Jim and Nell, are the personified secret selves of James and Eleanor, each conducting a dialogue with his or her outer self. It is all both hilarious and bittersweet by turns, with surprising twists and fizzy dialogue.

Elinor Renfield's production, partly hindered by the absence of the requisite two-tiered set and by her cutting down the nonspeaking roles from six to four, lacks some much-needed bite. Simon Jones, as James, the *homme moyen sensuel,* is more *moyen* than *sensuel,* but John Curless shines as his unbridled alter ego; Maureen Anderman is a bit too frumpy as Eleanor, with Leslie Lyles too grim as her double. As Kate, Natacha Roi is randily right, but Lucy Martin is off-key as Agnes. It is too bad that because of this production a much better London one could not come over; still, there is enough here to give married couples—and some singles—pause for thought. ■

IN BRIEF: ARCHITECTURE JOSEPH GIOVANNINI

WHEN HE WAS BUILDING THE MUSEUM OF Non-Objective Painting for Solomon Guggenheim, Frank Lloyd Wright's private little chuckle was to spend earnings from his commission on traditional Japanese art. From his first trip to Japan in 1905 and for the rest of his life, Wright collected prints, paintings, and textiles, and from 1910 to 1922 he was America's foremost dealer. Working at the Met twenty years ago, Julia Meech, curator of **Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan: The Architect's Other Passion**, noted that a certain "F. L. Wright" was the source of 400 woodblock prints. Today, she calculates that Wright sold some $300,000 worth of *ukiyo-e* prints at a time when his 10 percent commission on, for example, the Henry Allen house of 1918 yielded only $2,700. At the Japan Society Gallery, she exhibits prints, textiles, and paintings that passed through his hands, including two darkly vaporous seventeenth-century paintings acquired by Wright during the Guggenheim years.

Dealing amounted to more than a second career that kept him afloat during lean times. There's an intimacy about this show, a kind of obsessive love confirmed by Wright's words cited at the beginning: "It is no secret that prints choose whom they love and there is then no salvation but surrender." This art seeped into the architect's subconscious, fueling his design sensibility like aesthetic oxygen: We're wandering here in Wright's mind.

In Meech's accompanying book, Curtis Besinger, a former Taliesin fellow, says the prints, which reach out into the space beyond their margins, taught that a house can extend past its own boundaries and site. Wright transformed his cherished prints into another form of the sublime, regularly producing such stunning visions as the Imperial Hotel, among the lesser-known buildings he did in Japan (the chromatic and geometric complexity of a study for one hotel mural shows that Wright didn't need to drop acid). The artifacts that reveal the most about the Asia of Wright's imagination are photos of his Wisconsin home, where he arrayed textiles, screens, Buddhas, and Chinese rugs in a brilliant collage. They are integral to the architecture. This intelligent, focused show frames its subject tightly, weaving all the parts into a visual tapestry that is surprisingly whole. Surrender to the beauty. ■

TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

The Joy of Sets

When Billie Beat Bobby time-travels back to an era when feminists were heroines and male-chauvinist pigs were objects of derision (imagine that!).

WHEN HOLLY HUNTER is done with us, she will have left behind a whole virtual reality of American heroines, from *Broadcast News* to *Miss Firecracker* to *Roe vs. Wade* to *The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-Murdering Mom.* Jane Anderson, who wrote the screenplay for *True Adventures,* is likewise building a memory palace, from *How to Make an American Quilt* to *The Baby Dance,* in which these women are encouraged to show off, with a radical spin on back roads, class angles, feminist choice, and media hype. That Hunter should star as Billie Jean King in **When Billie Beat Bobby**, a film about the 1973 tennis "Battle of the Sexes" written and directed by Anderson, is such a terrific idea that I am amazed it occurred to network television instead of cable. And that Ron Silver agreed to sign on as Bobby Riggs, the motormouth hustler, the male-chauvinist Mouseketeer, is a crazy dividend.

Making a racket: Ron Silver as Bobby Riggs and Holly Hunter as Billie Jean King in *When Billie Beat Bobby.*

I've been partial to Billie Jean for a very long time, and not just because she organized the Women's Tennis Association and almost single-handedly engineered equal prize money for equal athletic showmanship. She is also probably the best thing that ever happened to Long Beach, California, where, when I was growing up in the fifties, the churches looked like airports, the high schools looked like filling stations, and the old people gathered at sunset in their electric go-carts to recall the snows of Iowa. By the time Billie Jean got to Wimbledon in 1972—"When Feminism Was Still a Dirty Word," the movie tells us in a wicked title shot—she was prodding the rest of the woman players to sign a petition to withhold their labor. And there, on television and in the tabs, was the egregious Riggs, a 55-year-old buckgrubber, sound-biter, headline-grabber, and all-around media brat, trying to bait the women into a challenge match. It worked with the ladylike Margaret Court, whose subsequent humiliation at the hands of Riggs entertained so many Barcaloungers that a producer at ABC correctly imagined a ratings bonanza if only . . .

Billie Jean had everything to lose—even her locker-mates bet against her—but she was also more than ABC had bargained for, insisting not only on equal prize money but on equal licensing fees. She could also bite some sound herself. (When he says, "I'm gonna serve left-handed, and I'm gonna wear high heels," she responds: "I don't care if you show up in a jock strap.") And unlike the Riggs who cavorted for the cameras, wearing a raincoat, holding an umbrella, hoisting a beer or balloons, she trained with steely purpose. It's steel as well as spunk that Hunter embodies and Anderson admires—plus the investment so many of us had in her wiping the smirk from his face. ("Billie Jean, beat the *crap* out of him," says a stewardess when the plane touches down in Houston.)

When Billie Beat Bobby has a tricky wire to walk. It's obviously rooting for its heroine, but it also wants, it needs, to make fun of Howard Cosell, the Astrodome, and the television commercials, not to mention the silly idea that three sets of tennis could say anything profound about gender and justice. It achieves all this with sleight-of-hand and fancy footwork.

Hunter, as usual, steals our heart. When she allows herself to be borne by bare-chested myrmidons into the Astrodome on a royal litter, like a virgin sacrifice—Nora Ephron is there, and so is Salvador Dalí!—it is as if, through her wire-rims, we see both the horizon and a hoot. But Silver deserves a lot of credit, too. He must make himself ridiculous and squirrelly, puffed up with Marlon Brando pouches, a blowhard. Several years later, Billie Jean King would talk about bisexuality as if it were a fact of life instead of a war crime. And I was proud of Long Beach.

When Billie Beat Bobby
Monday, April 16; 8 to 10 P.M.; ABC

Jesus Christ Superstar
Wednesday, April 11; 8 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13

Photograph by Bob D'Amico/2001 ABC, Inc.

NEVER MIND WHY PUBLIC TELEVISION IN general and *Great Performances* in particular are as much in love with Andrew Lloyd Webber as I am with Billie Jean. The TV adaptation of **Jesus Christ Superstar**, from the London and Broadway revival directed by Gale Edwards, is a wowser, with Glenn Carter as a Messiah who has his doubts, Jerome Pradon as a Judas who might just as well have been a character in a novel by Albert Camus, and Renee Castle as a Mary Magdalene who'd have vamped Augustine and Aquinas. Instead of the usual desert, we get an inner city and a police state, Darth Vader cops and leather-jacketed Teddy Boys, fascistic underwear and left-wing street gangs, Las Vegas glitz and French Revolutionary slogans. As in *When Billie Beat Bobby*, we also get the vampire media—witches with *X-Files* flashlights. And when Jesus invades the temple, he seems to be chasing out the pro wrestlers rather than the money changers. Be warned that the flagellation scene is rough stuff, and that the agonies of the Cross are very real indeed, especially the nails in the palms.

TV Notes

Medicating Kids (APRIL 10; 10 TO 11 P.M.; Channel 13) is a "Frontline" report on such stimulant drugs as Ritalin, Adderall, Concerta, and Dexedrine, and such behavioral syndromes as "attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder," as they combine to confuse four families during one year in Denver. Scientologists who insist that everything from schizophrenia to autism is a psychiatric shuck are no help at all. And not even "Frontline" can make up its mind about ADHD.

Citizen Reno (Fridays through April 27; 10 to 10:30 P.M.; Bravo) this week does for the supposed recycling of garbage in NYC what the comedian did last week for the medical establishment in the age of HMOs, and what she will do before the month is out to the New York Stock Exchange. Think of this wonderful stuff as Investigative Stand-Up.

A Question of Miracles (April 15; 10 to 11:15 P.M.; HBO) sends "America Undercover" into the faith-healing tents of the evangelicals, where almost nothing turns out to be what it seemed during the noisy ceremonies, probably because of chemical reactions in the brain during crowded rituals with powerful music, leading to a temporary but euphoric "God experience" some scientists are trying to isolate in our limbic systems.■

POP MUSIC ROBERT LEVINE

Unkindest Cuts

Springsteen's latest concert album and film capture much of his great band's spirit; it's what's *missing* that's most irksome.

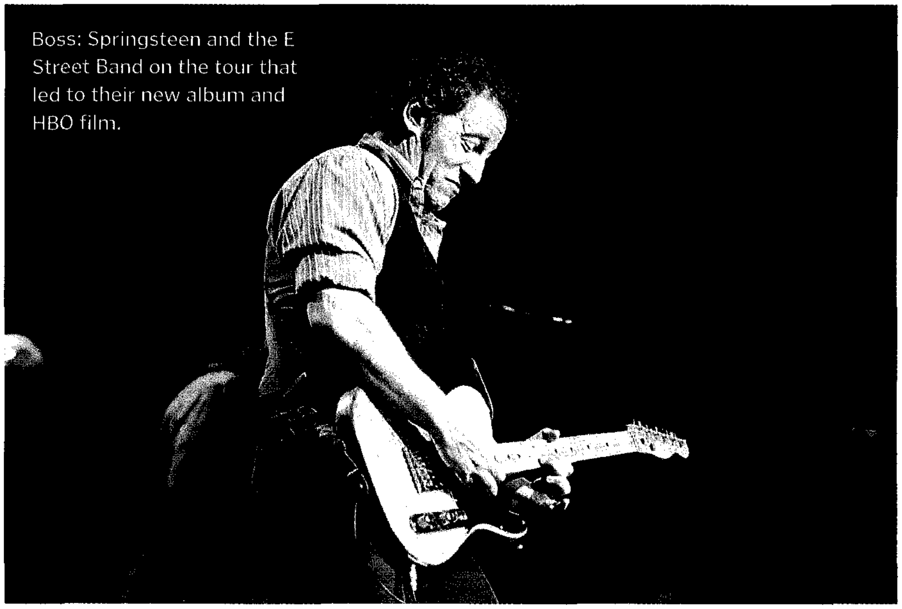
FOR MUCH OF THE SEVENTIES and eighties, Bruce Springsteen ended his concerts with a medley of R&B hits—"Devil With a Blue Dress On" and "Good Golly, Miss Molly," among others. Coming after three hours of brooding over the darkness on the edge of town and later the promise and pain of being born in the U.S.A., it was more than a way for rock's consummate showman to exit on an up note: It provided an emotional climax that restated his faith that the music that changed his own life could still provide not only the escape his early songs sought but the sense of connection he later contemplated. But when he released *Live 1975–85*, the three-disc set that capped the most successful part of his career, the medley was nowhere to be found.

At three hours and up, Springsteen's concerts have always been extended and intense enough to form their own narratives, but neither of his previous live albums has captured them: *Live 1975–85* is too unfocused, the single-disc *MTV Plugged* simply too modest. Recorded during the last two nights of his 1999–2000 tour with the E Street Band, **Live in New York City** and the accompanying HBO special, which premiered April 7, come closer to conveying the essence of a Springsteen show, at least partly because they retain much of the pacing and humor that made the concerts more than formulaic reunions. Reveling in the pure force of seventies rockers like "Prove It All Night," finding new nuances in acoustic songs like "Atlantic City," and ending with "Land of Hope and Dreams"—a new song about "the rededication and rebirth of our band"—Springsteen and his buddies live out onstage the search for "ties that bind" that's always been at the heart of his music.

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band
Live in New York City
(Columbia)

Pearl Jam
The Bootleg Series (Epic)

But though *Live in New York City* hits all the tour's major themes, it hardly tells the whole story. Near the end of every concert, "If I Should Fall Behind," a love song Springsteen recast as a paean to brotherhood by having his bandmates trade vers-



Boss: Springsteen and the E Street Band on the tour that led to their new album and HBO film.

Photograph by Jeffrey Mayer/Star File Photo.

es, provided an underpinning for Springsteen's conception of his reunion tour as a testament to enduring loyalty. On *Live,* it lacks the same impact because it's reduced to an "additional track" tacked on out of sequence at the end of the second disc. Then there are the inevitable cuts. At first it's hard to blame Springsteen for editing out the throwaway rocker "Light of Day." But without it, the album lacks Springsteen's arena-rock-preacher act—a comically exaggerated monologue about "the power! The promise! The majesty! The mystery! The ministry of rock and roll!".

Taken on its own, *Live* is still the best officially released evidence of the camaraderie that makes the E Street Band so vital, as well as an essential next chapter for an artist who hasn't released a studio album in some time. But there are still ways in which, as for so many of Springsteen's performances, you had to be there.

MORE THAN ANY OTHER NINETIES BAND, Pearl Jam shares both Springsteen's conviction that rock can transform one's life and his early tendency to pay tribute to the artists who changed his—in Pearl Jam's case, the Who and Neil Young. Once the band survived the runaway success of its grunge years and its protracted feud with Ticketmaster, its concerts, too, became less performances than celebrations of the enduring connection between the band and its audience.

Of course, Pearl Jam's approach to presenting those concerts couldn't be more different from Springsteen's. Instead of editing a live album from a tour or even a show, it released each of its full 2000 concerts—all 72 of them—as unedited separate albums in **The Bootleg Series** (Epic). (When Pearl Jam says unedited, it *means* unedited: Even the cheering while the band prepares for the encores lasts as long as it did live, which adds up to a lot of applause to listen to in the living room.)

The albums obviously aren't for the casual fan—at around two hours each, they would require six days to listen to in their entirety. But they reveal a warts-and-all spontaneity—a Vegas shot at "Can't Help Falling in Love," a surprisingly heartfelt version of Buddy Holly's "Everyday" in his hometown of Lubbock, Texas—that most performers are afraid to commit to record. It's exactly the kind of looseness that would have made *Live* the concert album Springsteen deserves. ■

Goode Old Days

Eric Goode, impresario of the eighties hot spot Area, lures back his old clientele for more age-appropriate dining at the Park.

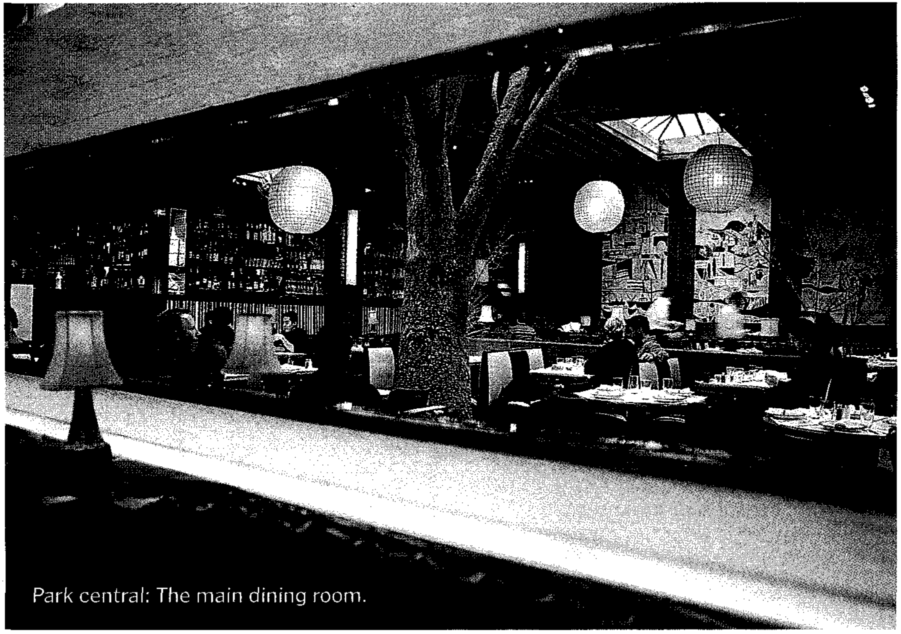
UNLESS YOU'RE OPRAH, OWNing up to flaws in front of strangers is akin to drawer-dropping, kind of like having a piece of spinach stuck to your soul. If I were a normal critic, unfettered and unmoved by memories (or the track record of those I'm asked to judge), I wouldn't now be exposing my Joe Boxers. But alas, like Dorian Gray, John Ashcroft, and your last boyfriend, I come with a past—one very easily and vividly recalled. And I'll admit: Too often it colors my perceptions, altering them with the same eerie expertise that Kevyn Aucoin uses to transform Oprah for her cover shoots.

If I were truly objective, I doubt that I'd find sitting in a booth at **The Park** as appealing as I do. I know I'd marvel at the décor, since the restaurant outdoes every other new grand hangout in its swift, conclusive obliteration of the outside world. With a soaring dracaena as its central totem, the Park is a high-ceilinged, contemporary El Morocco for those who nightly head to cafés but would never refer to themselves as society.

The Park
118 Tenth Avenue
212-352-3313.

Yes, here is yet another spot so immediately popular that it's easy for those who don't consider themselves popularity-contest winners to take potshots at it. But for me, there is something notable that sets the Park apart from Hudson Cafeteria, Lot 61, or Canteen, places that appear to be the competition. It's not the staff, though they're more exotically handsome than anyone in *Paper Magazine*'s annual compendium of 50 Beautiful People. Nor is it the ambient amber lighting. And it's not the music, because it's often too loud too early, though the selection—more sultry funk than rap, more R&B than hip-hop—is a tip-off.

It's the crowd. A cursory look around the room might lead one to assume those gathered here are merely the usual collection of leather-pants-wearing, blond-streak-having Jimmy Choo–shoe fanciers. But there are frequent shocks of silver-



Park central: The main dining room.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

gray curls among this bunch, bodies a bit more maturely curved, eyes a little wiser—often wearing glasses when it's menu time—and faces that have discovered that collagen can be much more effective than cologne. You might even hear the squeal of a child or two.

So who are they? Do you remember Area? If you don't, find an acquaintance who does. He or she will corroborate: It was the savviest, smartest club that ever existed. Paradise Garage had a greater D.J., the Mudd Club offered exclusivity, and you could get laid at Nell's in less time than it took to blow-dry your hair. But none of these venues radiated the originality, sophistication, or non-yuppie thrill of New York in the eighties like Area, which startlingly, wittily, and often beautifully altered its décor every six weeks with a new "installation." Whether the theme was Red, Religion, or Natural History, Area was intoxicating, a rare instance when ingeniousness and seduction were essential ingredients in nightlife. No surprise, then, that it became a favorite for all the people who made Stephen Saban's column in the original *Details* read like a modern version of Balzac's *The Human Comedy*. Many of them were the gallery owners, shopkeepers, craftsmen, restaurateurs, performers, and journalists who first adventurously colonized SoHo, the East Village, and TriBeCa. They gave a city left for dead in the seventies new life. And they knew how to have a good time.

"People who aren't my age, or who don't have a similar past, may not be as eager to play in the Park."

Maybe because most everything that came after seemed formulaic (Palladium was big and expensive but not clever), when Area closed, these folks scattered, and for me, New York became a bit less vibrant. However, one of Area's principal owners and imagineers was Eric Goode—who happens to be one of the principal owners of the Park (Sean MacPherson is the other), which explains why it looks the way it does. And his ownership is probably the reason many of these interesting-but-no-longer-coltish folks have collectively reappeared. Perhaps it's a generational thing, or I may simply be wishing it, but their aggregate, unpushy self-confidence has given the room the kind of it's-so-cool-to-live-here familiarity a longtime native feels walking into Odeon or Il Cantinori. It also seems to calm the young'uns who enter the dining room. (The bar, however, is a zoo.)

I don't mean to give the menu short shrift, because it gets better with each trip. The gumbo will never be dense enough to live up to its name, but it's a lively, devourable chicken-and-andouille soup. The foie gras is thick and lusty, the wild-bass tartare tasty but cut too chunky, the suckling pig good but too oily. It's too easy to mess up your charmeuse shirtfront eating beets and goat-cheese crostini, but the grilled lobster tail is terrific, tender with a faint perfume of garlic. Sweet roasted lobster is bathed in a nice balance of citrus and vanilla. The artichoke only *looks* terrific (though the stem is delicious). But the wild-mushroom salad is lovely through and through.

The rare tuna is often short on poivre, but it's real fine when the balance is right. The linguini with oven-roasted tomatoes is winning: light but aromatic and richly flavorful—as is the ample veal shank. The pressed chicken is crisp but overcooked. The branzino will recall fond memories of Barocco. The roasted halibut would have to be cooked a bit less in order to make it crispy but tender, and the bouillabaisse needs a lot more rouille and fire to make it work, but table-hop for more than a minute and your sharp, flinty porterhouse steak will surely be hijacked by your dinner companions. Banana beignets are a neat surprise. The hot apple crisp and the cookies are satisfying. None of the other desserts are. In fact, the angel-food cake would be equally at home on a potter's wheel.

I don't mind. I'm comfortable. And smiling. And prejudiced. People who aren't my age, or who don't have a similar past, may not be as eager to play in the Park. Think of it as Mercer Kitchen for seniors, or Bar Pitti moved indoors. Oprah would like it here. But as long as they're nice at the door, go at least once around the Park. Tell them I sent you, memories and all. ■

The Park, 118 Tenth Avenue, near 17th Street (212-352-3313). Open every night, 6 P.M. to 1 A.M. Appetizers, $6 to $18; entrées, $15 to $30. A.E., D.C., M.C., V.

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Movies

Edited by Ben Kaplan

This Week's Releases

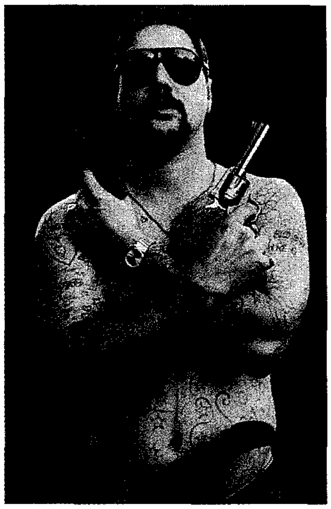
The Adventures of Joe Dirt
David Spade searches for Roseanne Barr and Gary Busey, who play the white-trash parents that abandoned him when he was 8 years old. Debut film from TV director Dennie Gordon. (1 hr. 33 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 4/11.

Bridget Jones's Diary
Renée Zellweger brings to life Helen Fielding's observant heroine in the romantic-comedy debut from director Sharon Maguire. Also starring Colin Firth and a perfectly cast Hugh Grant. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) • Opens 4/13.

Chopper
From Australia with blood, writer-director Andrew Dominik presents a homicidal maniac (Eric Bana) with a killer sense of humor. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) • Opens 4/11.

The Circle
Though banned in Iran, director Jafar Panahi's important film about a defiant mother may just be moving enough to prompt action in a society still brutally discriminatory against women. (1 hr. 31 mins.; NR) • Opens 4/13.

Josie and the Pussycats
The Spice Girls meet *Spinal Tap* in this feature-length *Behind the Music*. Rosario Dawson, Tara Reid, and Rachael Leigh Cook play the band, Alan Cumming the manager. Written and directed by Deborah Kaplan and Harry Elfont. (1 hr. 33 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 4/11.



Death becomes him:
Eric Bana in *Chopper.*

Kingdom Come
A comedy about a family rejoined at a funeral that threatens to tear them apart. Doug McHenry's (*Jason's Lyric*) second film stars LL Cool J, Vivica A. Fox, and Jada Pinkett Smith. (1 hr. 35 mins; PG) • Opens 4/11.

Lakeboat
Joe Mantegna directs a David Mamet script (with Charles Durning, Peter Falk, and Denis Leary) about male bonding and how sad and funny it can be. (1 hr. 38 mins; R) • Opens 4/13.

Old Man River
Emmy-winning director Allan Holzman's film of Cynthia Gates Fujikawa's stage performance about her search to understand her father, the character actor Jerry Fujikawa. (1 hr. 13 mins; NR) • Opens 4/16.

States of Control
A frustrated writer (Jennifer Van Dyck) commits random terror in order to reinvigorate her life. Directed by Zack Winestine. (1 hr. 24 mins; NR) • Opens 4/13.

New Films

Akira
Influential postapocalyptic Japanimation cult film. (2 hrs. 5mins; R) • AMC Empire 25 Theatres.

Along Came a Spider
Morgan Freeman reprises his role as detective and criminal profiler Alex Cross from *Kiss the Girls* in this foot-draggy but well-plotted crime thriller about an insanely ambitious kidnapper. With his courtly grace and sonorousness, Freeman is fun to watch even though the role barely tweaks his talent. (Rainer; pg. 70) (1 hr. 47 mins; R) • Loews Village; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; *Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas;* Plaza; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

American Desi
A love story about a young Indian man (Deep Katdare) who needs the girl of his dreams (Purva Bedi) to discover the culture he tried to ignore. (1 hr. 40 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

★ Amores Perros
The debut feature from director Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu is an extraordinary triptych about life and suffering in Mexico City. In each of the three sections, which cross over into each other, the subject is the damage done to people by violence. Each section also brings out the almost mystical specialness that exists between humans and their dogs. The dog-fighting sequences in the first section (no dogs were actually hurt) are full-throttle harrowing. The entire film is harrowing. (Rainer; 4/9/01) (2 hrs. 33 mins.; R) • UA Union Square; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

Beautiful Creatures
Two Englishwomen put their abusive boyfriends behind them in first-time director Bill Eagle's smart dark comedy. Starring Rachel Weisz. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center.

★ Before Night Falls
Javier Bardem gives an astonishing, freewheeling performance as the gay Cuban literary exile Reinaldo Arenas. Julian Schnabel directs, and he combines an extraordinary range of emotional colorations—the film goes from rhapsodic lyricism to horror in a blink. (Rainer; 1/8/01) (2 hrs. 13 mins; R) • Quad Cinema; Clearview's Chelsea; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Billy Elliot
The film is such a prodigious feat of four-hankie engineering that Julie Walters's fierce performance as the boy's dancing instructor may get lost in the suds. (Rainer; 10/23/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • CC Village East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Blow
Johnny Depp stars as the real-life drug dealer and junkie George Jung, and the movie tracks him from the late sixties, when he was in his early twenties and riding high, through four decades, ending in his incarceration. The early scenes set in Manhattan Beach have an ominous casualness, and so does Depp's performance. But George never really takes hold of our imagination: A cipher in misery is still a cipher. (Rainer; pg. 70) (2 hrs.; R) • Loews Village; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews Orpheum 7; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; bam Rose Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Bridget Jones's Diary
See 'This Week's Releases.' • Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Sony Lincoln Square; Whitestone; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium.

The Brothers
A group of friends have to face their commitment

Opening

High Scorer

"Diminished chords are a cliché," says the indie composer Carter Burwell, who's scored films like *Blood Simple, Three Kings,* and *Being John Malkovich.* "Another one is having strings playing tremolo to create suspense. People use that all the time, because directors don't want composers to leave emotions unresolved." Having just finished scoring the Coen brothers' next film ("currently just the untitled barber movie," he says with a laugh, holding back anything more), Carter will appear in a "Pinewood Dialogue" with his sound-effects editor, Skip Lievsay, at the American Museum of the Moving Image as part of the **Composing for Film** series. "I like moments of uncertainty," he says. "A good movie score sets a mood and establishes a psychology, like *The Birds,* which introduced the sounds that today are cliché." A screening of the Burwell-scored, Lievsay-sound-effected *Barton Fink* (pictured), followed by a discussion with Carter and Lievsay, begins at 2 P.M. on April 15. (For complete AMMI listings, see "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Photographs: top, courtesy of Film Forum; bottom, Photofest.

issues when one of their crowd decides to get married. Bill Bellamy and Morris Chestnut star in writer-director Gary Hardwick's cinematic debut. (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's 59th Street East; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Kings Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Canarsie; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay.

Opening

Girls Gone Wildcat

Only one man has the physical presence to modernize a franchise that first appeared (as a comic book, no less) in February 1963. Only one man could turn an obligatory star cameo in **Josie and the Pussycats** into a singular culture-defining moment. That man is Carson Daly. The film—broadly speaking, the Spice Girls meet *Spiñal Tap*—is about the rise and fall and rise again of an all-girl group, basically the Go-Gos before Belinda got fat. Carson, the Dick Clark of the 'NSYNC set, is engaged to Josie drummer Tara Reid, and her real-life (like, *oh, my God!*) bridesmaids, singer Rachael Leigh Cook and guitarist Rosario Dawson (pictured, left to right), complete this one-for-the-record-books multimedia marriage. Opens April 11.

Photograph courtesy of Universal Studios.

★ Cast Away
Tom Hanks plays a FedEx systems engineer who is stranded on a remote and uninhabited island in the South Pacific in this Robert Zemeckis movie. The film is a graceful and resonant fable about isolation and the will to endure, but a heavy cloud of inspirationalism hangs over it. (Rainer; 12/25/00) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; PG-13) • AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CO Cinema City.

Chocolat
Juliette Binoche plays the owner of a chocolate shop whose dainties bewitch a small town. Co-stars Johnny Depp and Alfred Molina; Lasse Hallström directs. (1 hr. 41 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Angelika Film Center; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's Metro Cinema; CO Alpine; Cinemart; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.

★ Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon
Set in nineteenth-century China, this Ang Lee movie is a ravishing martial-arts romance with sequences as magical as anything in the movies. (Rainer; 12/11/00) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; UA Gemini; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Bay Plaza; CO Kings Plaza; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium.

The Dish
Sam Neill plays an eccentric scientist on a remote Australian farm whose satellite dish is the only one capable of receiving Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon. Directed by Rob Stitch. (1 hr. 44 mins.; PG-13) • CC Village East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Sony Lincoln Square; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Down to Earth
Why do brash comics (here, Chris Rock) feel they have to turn themselves into saps in order to be movie stars? (Rainer; 2/26/01) (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews State; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; CO Kings Plaza; CO Fresh Meadows.

Ground Rules

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote current releases that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. Reviews are followed by the names of theaters where the film is playing.

Enemy at the Gates
Jean-Jacques Annaud's WWII movie is a compendium of old-time war-movie clichés. It stars Jude Law, impossibly miscast, as a Ural shepherd boy who becomes a Soviet sharpshooter during the battle of Stalingrad. Ed Harris is his Nazi counterpart, Major Koenig, and he's the only good thing in the movie. (Rainer; 3/26/01) (2 hrs. 11 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Loews Coronet; UA East; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; CO Alpine; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movies at Bayside; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

Exit Wounds
DMX and Steven Seagal team up to bring down a gaggle of corrupt cops in Detroit. Directed by Andrzej Bartkowiak (*Romeo Must Die*). (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Alpine; CO Kings Plaza; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Jackson Triplex; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Faat-Kine
Influential African filmmaker Ousmane Semebe's latest, about a single mother, and the role of women in Dakar, the capital city of Senegal. (1 hr. 58 mins; NR) • Film Forum.

15 Minutes
Writer-director John Herzfeld's lurid melodrama stars Robert De Niro as a celebrity cop and Ed Burns as an arson investigator. They team up well, but the film is rancorous and overblown—an indictment of the tabloid-media age that is all of a piece with what it's supposedly attacking. (Rainer; 3/19/01) (2 hrs.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Sutton; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Marboro; North Shore Towers; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Staten Island.

★ Gladiator
Ridley Scott's attempt to make a Roman epic on the scale of *Spartacus* or *Ben-Hur* while presenting us with a hero, Russell Crowe's Maximus, who is monumentally withdrawn. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) • Loews State.

Hannibal
Anthony Hopkins is a plumper, more princely cannibal Hannibal Lecter this time out, and he's also more cartoonized—a figure of grisly fun. Julianne Moore replaces Jodie Foster as FBI agent Clarice Starling, and she gives a clenched-jaw performance that is skillful but out of keeping with the tone of flamboyant Grand Guignol burlesque. Ridley Scott can't sustain the tone, either; he's too enamored of his own glissando camera moves and stylishness to bring out the black humor. (Rainer; 2/19/01) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews State; Loews 84th Street; Cinemart; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.

Heartbreakers
Sigourney Weaver and Jennifer Love Hewitt play mother-daughter con artists in this lame comedy also starring Gene Hackman as a teeth-stained tobacco heir with a perpetual retching cough. (Rainer; 4/2/01) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; PG-13) • Battery Park City Cinema; Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's Olympia; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; CO Alpine; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

In the Mood for Love
Wong Kar-Wai's new film is set in Hong Kong in

1962, but most of it is shot indoors. Trancelike yet chichi, it's an example of pop schlock aestheticism. Tony Leung and Maggie Cheung play neighbors whose respective spouses are having an affair. Wong uses his camera to play peekaboo with these two, and achieves some pretty effects, but the emotional temperature is cold. (Rainer; 2/6/01) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; CC Village East.

Just Visiting

Jean Reno and Christian Cavier play eleventh-century knights who are transported by Malcolm McDowell to modern-day Chicago. Directed by Jean-Marie Poiré. (1 hr. 28 mins; PG-13) • CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CC Sutton; Whitestone; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.

Keep the River on Your Right

A documentary charting the return of 80-year-old Tobias Schneebaum to the Peruvian tribe for which he deserted a New York artist's life in 1954. Directed by brother and sister David and Laurie Shapiro. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) • Quad Cinema; Clearview's First & 62nd St.

★ Memento

Christopher Nolan's low-budget noir stars Guy Pearce as a man seeking out his wife's murderer. His character has a mental handicap: a condition where he can't remember anything for more than fifteen minutes or so. The story is worked out in roughly reverse chronological order, and Nolan has a fondness for existential dread that may go over better with noir-soaked movie critics and overserious philosophy grad students than with general audiences. But it's an intriguing movie anyway. (Rainer; 3/26/01) (2 hrs.; R) • CC Angelika Film Center; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; bam Rose Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

The Mexican

Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts star in this lackadaisical action comedy about a feckless bagman for the mob and his errant girlfriend. The story is constructed along parallel lines, with Pitt and Roberts rarely interacting. Roberts's story line is the better of the two; she acts opposite James Gandolfini, who gives the film its powerful moments. (Rainer, 3/12/01) (2 hrs.; R) • Loews 42nd Street E Walk; CO Alpine; Cinemart; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.

Nico & Dani

Sexual-coming-of-age tale about two Spanish teenagers. Starring Fernando Ramallo and Jordi Vilches. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • Cinema Village.

★ O Brother, Where Art Thou?

Set in Depression-era Mississippi, this Coen-brothers movie actually takes place in their usual rarefied and icy-hot postmodern Nowheresville. George Clooney, John Turturro, and Tim Blake Nelson star as escaped convicts; the shagginess of the performances is appealing. The interspersed folk-country music is extraordinary, giving the film an emotional resonance uncommon to the Coen oeuvre. (1 hr. 46 mins.; PG-13) • UA Union Square; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Loews 84th Street.

On Hostile Ground

Liz Mermin and Jenny Raskin's poignant abortion documentary. (1 hr. 13 mins; NR) • The Screening Room.

Pokémon 3

See 'This Week's Releases.' (1 hr. 40 mins; G) • UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Magic Johnson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; Atrium.

Opening

Bridget Goes to Hollywood

"It's the flying bit in *Crouching Tiger* that might put Bridget slightly off," author **Helen Fielding** laughs. "But what she wouldn't understand is how they've been in love all their life and still haven't shagged. She'd have a big crush on Benicio in *Traffic*—they both have bad hair days, and she'd like how he went into that gay bar to pick up the bad guy. She might do that, too." Helen Fielding, the fantastically flighty blonde author (pictured, at *Bridget*'s New York premiere), is not Bridget Jones. But in Fielding's inimitable world of fiction imitating life—for instance, the boyfriend in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, named Mark Darcy, was based loosely on actor Colin Firth, who plays Mark Darcy in the film—the author, who prefers to skip a salad with lunch in favor of dessert and took a screenwriting course only *after* writing several drafts of the *Bridget Jones* script, is as close to the real, cultish thing as we're likely to see. "People thinking I'm Bridget makes life easier," Fielding says, "because even if the unthinkable happens—like being on a book tour and my suitcase getting swapped for a large man's, bearing only shorts and T-shirts—it's okay, because people say, 'Oh, that's just Bridget.' When sometimes it's just me." Currently at work on a non-Bridget book about Los Angeles, Fielding is eating up the experiences around her splashy new film. "The fuss with the movie is quite good material. Like when I was arriving from London, publicity asked if I'd like a meet-and-greet at the airport. I was excited, picturing a carpet, applause, maybe a small gift, a rum punch. But when it turned up, it was this rather small man who sort of just helped with the luggage. I was crestfallen." But—whoever the real Helen-and-Bridget might be—totally in character. *Bridget Jones's Diary* opens on April 13. B.K.

Photograph by Sonia Moskowitz/Globe Photos.

★ Quills

Philip Kaufman's movie about the Marquis de Sade is a voluptuous impasto that mixes together angels and demons in a richly ambiguous swirl. Geoffrey Rush plays Sade, imprisoned in the Charenton asylum for the insane, and he's a degenerate fop who smuggles scurrilous screeds out into the world with the help of a chambermaid (a radiant Kate Winslet) and gets obliterated for his troubles. Michael Caine is the doctor-torturer who puts the screws to Sade; Joaquin Phoenix is the abbé. (Rainer; 11/27/00) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) • CC Village East.

Recess: School's Out

Allyce Beasley, Dabney Coleman, and Jason Davis lend their voices to this animated film about an evil high-school principal who aspires to eradicate summer vacation by using a special laser gun. (1 hr. 22 mins.; G) • AMC Empire 25 Theatres; CO Cinema City.

Say It Isn't So

Antic Farrelly-brothers-produced comedy starring Chris Klein as a feckless suitor in love with someone who may be his sister, played aptly by Heather Graham. Directorial debut of J. B. Rogers. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) • Battery Park City Cinema; Bay Plaza.

See Spot Run

First-time feature from TV director John Whitesell (*A Different World*, *Jack and Jill*) about a highly intelligent FBI dog and his dim-witted master, convincingly portrayed by David Arquette. (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG) • Battery Park City Cinema; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO Alpine; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside; CO Fresh Meadows; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas; Main Street Cinemas; North Shore Towers; Atrium.

Shadow Magic

A comedy set in 1902 Beijing, about the first Chinese movie house and a town that becomes obsessed. Written and directed by Ann Hu. (1 hr. 19 mins.; PG) • Quad Cinema; CC Eastside Playhouse.

Smell of Camphor, Fragrance of Jasmine

A neurotic Iranian filmmaker's contemplations of death prompt him to film his own funeral. Starring and directed by Bahman Farjami. (1 hr. 33 mins; NR) • Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

Someone Like You

Ashley Judd and Hugh Jackman play unlikely roommates-cum-lovers in this romantic comedy from director Tony Goldwyn (*A Walk on the Moon*). Also starring Greg Kinnear and Marisa Tomei. (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Clearview's Olympia; Bay Plaza; CO Alpine; Pavilion; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.

ıy Kids
ɔbert Rodriguez wrote and directed this tale of two ildren (Alexa Vega, Daryl Sabara) who must rescue ɜir square-seeming secret-agent parents (Antonio nderas, Carla Gugino). (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) • UA ion Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay The-e; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Magic ınson Harlem USA; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln uare; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; CO ɔine; CO Kings Plaza; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Mul-lex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; ntre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cine-ı; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; ·ium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.

ıe Tailor of Panama
ın Boorman's movie of the John Le Carré bestseller a freewheeling jape that turns into a pitch-black rlesque with surprising depths of feeling. Pierce osnan plays a swankly cynical British spy stationed ciled is more like it) in Panama. Geoffrey Rush plays ɜ ritzy tailor with the sordid past whom he black-ıils. Boorman gets into the salsa rhythm of the lo-.e; he gives corruption its sexy due. The performers, ıo also include Brendan Gleeson and Jamie Lee ırtis are marvelous, none more so than Rush, who s never been as moving or passionate. (Rainer; 2/01) (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) • UA Union Square; ɜarview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; AMC Empire Theatres; Clearview's Beekman; Sony Lincoln Square; vilion; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.

ımcats
ıe last single man standing may win a substantial ıh bet in director Gregory Poirer's debut film, but ll surely lose Shannon Elizabeth. Also starring Jerry 'Connell and Jake Busey. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) • ɜarview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's elsea West; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Magic Johnson rlem USA; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; ıden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Marboro; UA Movies at eepshead Bay; Canarsie; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman As-·ia Cinema; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA ɔvieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten ɜnd; YWCA Cine-Club.

Traffic
ɜven Soderbergh directed this uneven mélange—a ɔvie about drug trafficking in which several seem-ȝly disparate stories come together in a sweeping ıion of corruption and re-mption. Starring Michael ɔuglas, Catherine Zeta-ıes, Benicio Del Toro, and ɔn Cheadle. (Rainer; 2/01) (2 hrs. 15 mins.; R) .ainer; 1/2/01) (2 hrs. 20 ıns.; R) • Battery Park City Cin-ıa; Loews Village; Clearview's elsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; ɜws Astor Plaza; Loews 72nd East; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony ıcoln Square; Whitestone; Lin-n Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; . Marboro; CO Fresh Meadows; ufman Astoria Cinema; North ore Towers; Atrium.

ıe Widow of St. Pierre
ıpressive to look at, but the rformers, especially Juliette ıoche, are too freeze-dried for all the supposed pas-n on display. (Rainer; 3/5/01) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) • ·is Theatre; Kew Gardens Cinemas.

Yi
ˡward Yang's complicated tale examining the rela-ınship between a mother and son, and the nature family in general. (2 hrs. 53 mins.; NR) • Cinema lage.

You Can Count on Me
riter-director Kenneth Lonergan's wonderfully ıall-scale movie stars Mark Ruffalo and Laura Lin-y as reunited brother and sister, and theirs is one of ɜ most convincing portrayals of family connection e ever seen. (Rainer; 10/23/00) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) :C Village East; AMC Empire 25 Theatres; Kew Gardens ıemas.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Battery Park City Cinema
102 North End Ave. (212-945-3418) • The Brothers; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Hannibal; Heartbreakers; In the Mood for Love; Pollock; Say It Isn't So; See Spot Run; Traffic.

CC Angelika Film Center
18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • Beautiful Creatures; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Memento; Pollock.

CC Village East
189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • Billy Elliot; The Dish; In the Mood for Love; Just Visiting; Quills; You Can Count on Me.

Cinema Village
22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • American Desi; Nico & Dani; Yi Yi.

Clearview's Waverly
323 Sixth Ave. (212-777-FILM#603) • Heartbreakers; Tomcats.

Film Forum
209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) • Chopper; Faat-Kine.

Loews Village
66 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Along Came a Spider; Blow; The Brothers; Enemy at the Gates; Traffic.

Quad Cinema
34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • Before Night Falls; Keep the River on Your Right; Shadow Magic; Smell of Camphor, Fragrance of Jasmine.

The Screening Room
54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) • On Hostile Ground.

UA Union Square
13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • Amores Perros; Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; The Tailor of Panama; Tomcats.

14th-41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas
160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • Blow; The Brothers; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You.

Clearview's Chelsea
260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • Before Night Falls; Bridget Jones's Diary; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon 3; Pollock; Spy Kids; The Tailor of Panama; Traffic.

Clearview's Chelsea West
333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • The Adventures of Joe Dirt; Someone Like You; Tomcats.

Loews 19th St. East
890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • The Brothers; Enemy at the Gates; Memento.

Loews Kips Bay Theatre
570 Second Ave. (212-505-6397#558) • Along Came a Spider; Bridget Jones's Diary; Chocolat; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; The Dish; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Memento; Spy Kids; The Tailor of Panama; Tomcats; Traffic.

42nd-60th Streets

AMC Empire 25 Theatres
234 W. 42nd St. (212-398-3939) • Akira; Before Night Falls; Billy Elliot; Blow; The Brothers; Cast Away; Chocolat; The Dish; Enemy at the Gates; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Pokémon 3; Pollock; Recess: School's Out; See Spot Run; Someone Like You; The Tailor of Panama; You Can Count on Me.

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3
1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • Blow; Chocolat; Spy Kids.

CC Eastside Playhouse
919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) • Shadow Magic.

CC Sutton
205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) • 15 Minutes; Just Visiting.

Clearview's 59th Street East
239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • The Brothers.

Clearview's Ziegfeld
141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • Along Came a Spider.

Loews 42nd Street E Walk
42nd St. at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Hannibal; Memento; The Mexican; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

Loews Astor Plaza
44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Traffic.

Loews Coronet
993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (212-505-CINE#608) • Enemy at the Gates.

Loews State
1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • Down to Earth; Gladiator; Hannibal.

Paris Theatre
4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • The Widow of St. Pierre.

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East
210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Just Visiting; Someone Like You; Spy Kids.

Clearview's Beekman
1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (212-777-FILM#606) • The Tailor of Panama.

Opening

Safely Through Customs

Singing illuminates *Very Annie-Mary,* a Manischewitz-sweet story about a would-be songstress (Rachel Griffiths) growing up in a stifling but hilarious Welsh town. Psychopathy resonates from *Gangster No. 1,* (starring Paul Bettany, pictured), a moonshine-harsh story about an aging, ruthless criminal looking back on a chilling but decadent London underworld. Taken together, the opening two selections of **Contemporary Films From Britain** at the Walter Reade Theater run the gamut of spicy new British visions currently looking for Stateside distribution. No matter your taste, feel free to sample: British film, unlike British beef, remains a legal and disease-free import. Beginning April 13.

ɔtograph courtesy of The Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Clearview's First & 62nd St.
400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • Heartbreakers; Keep the River on Your Right; Memento; Pokémon 3; Pollock; Someone Like You.

Clearview's Park and 86th St.
125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • Bridget Jones's Diary; Chocolat; Heartbreakers; Kingdom Come.

Loews 72nd St. East
1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#704) • Traffic.

Loews New York Twin
1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#698) • Along Came a Spider.

Loews Orpheum 7
1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • *Along Came a Spider; Blow; The Brothers; Exit Wounds;* Pokémon 3; Tomcats; Traffic.

UA East
1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • Enemy at the Gates.

UA Gemini
1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Into the Arms of* Strangers; Tomcats.

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway
1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • *Someone Like You.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema
2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (212-777-FILM#609) • Along Came a Spider; Chocolat.

Clearview's Olympia
2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (212-777-FILM#613) • Heartbreakers; Someone Like You.

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas
30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) • Amores Perros; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Memento; Pollock; Smell of Camphor, Fragrance of Jasmine.

Loews 84th Street
2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • *The Brothers; Exit* Wounds; 15 Minutes; Hannibal; O Brother, Where Art Thou?.

Magic Johnson Harlem USA
300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • Along Came a Spider; Blow; The Brothers; Exit Wounds; Pokémon 3; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

New Coliseum
701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; Pokémon 3; Spy Kids.

Nova
3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) • *The Brothers;* Exit Wounds; Pokémon 3; Spy Kids.

Sony Lincoln Square
1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • Along Came a Spider; Blow; Bridget Jones's Diary; The Dish; Enemy at the Gates; Heartbreakers; Spy Kids; The Tailor of Panama; Tomcats; Traffic.

Bronx

Bay Plaza
2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • Blow; The Brothers; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Down to Earth; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Heartbreakers; Say It Isn't So; See Spot Run; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

Concourse Plaza
214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • Along Came a Spider; The Brothers; Down to Earth; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; *Pokémon 3; See Spot Run; Spy Kids.*

Whitestone
2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • Along Came a Spider; Blow; Bridget Jones's Diary; The Brothers; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon 3; See Spot Run; Spy Kids; Tomcats; Traffic.

Brooklyn

BAM **Rose Cinemas**
30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • Blow; Memento; Pollock. (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights
70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) • Enemy at the Gates; O Brother, Where Art Thou?; Snatch.

Clearview's Cobble Hill
265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • The Dish; Just Visiting; Memento; Pollock; Spy Kids.

CO Alpine
6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (718-777-FILM#580) • Chocolat; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; The Mexican; See Spot Run; Someone Like You; Spy Kids.

CO Fortway
6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (718-777-FILM#578) • Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; 15 M utes; Get Over It; Say It Isn't So; Tomcats; Traffic.

CO Kings Plaza
5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (718-77 FILM#579) • The Brothers; Crouching Tiger, Hidd Dragon; Down to Earth; Exit Wounds; Recess: School's (; Spy Kids.

Kent Triplex
Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • Alc Came a Spider; Exit Wounds; Pokémon 3; Spy Kids.

Linden Boulevard Multiplex
Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) • Alc Came a Spider; Blow; The Brothers; Enemy at the Gat Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Pokémon 3; See Spot Run; S Kids; Tomcats; Traffic.

Pavilion
188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • Along Ca a Spider; Blow; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; Hea breakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You; S Kids; The Tailor of Panama; Traffic.

Ridgewood
55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993 *Along Came a Spider; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Woun* Kingdom Come; Pokémon 3.

UA Marboro
6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • 15 M utes; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You; Tomcats; Traffic.

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay
3907 Shore Pkwy., off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-61 1700) • *Along Came a Spider; Blow; Enemy at the Gat* Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Someone L You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

Queens

Canarsie
9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) • The Bro ers; Exit Wounds; Pokémon 3; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

Centre Sunnyside
42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • Along Cam Spider; Blow; Enemy at the Gates; Hea breakers; Pokémon 3; See Spot Run; S *Kids; Tomcats.*

Cinemart
106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72 Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244 Along Came a Spider; Chocolat; Hannit Just Visiting; The Mexican.

CO Fresh Meadows
Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th (718-777-FILM#619) • Chocol Down to Earth; Hannibal; The Mexic See Spot Run; Traffic.

College Point Multiplex
28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (71 886-4900) • Along Came a Spider; Bl *Bridget Jones's Diary; The Brothe* Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Enemy the Gates; Exit Wounds; 15 Minut Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon See Spot Run; Spy Kids; Tomcats; Traffi

Jackson Triplex
82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-47 6777) • *The Brothers; Exit Woun* Pokémon 3; Spy Kids.

Kaufman Astoria Cinema
38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • Along Cam Spider; Blow; Bridget Jones's Diary; The Brothers; Chocol Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Enemy at the Gates; H nibal; Memento; The Mexican; See Spot Run; Spy Kids; T *Tailor of Panama; Tomcats; Traffic.*

Kew Gardens Cinemas
81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • Before Ni Falls; Billy Elliot; The Dish; Into the Arms of Strangers; M mento; Pollock; See Spot Run; The Widow of St. Pierre; Y Can Count on Me.

Main Street Cinemas
72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • *Along Came a Spid* Blow; Heartbreakers; Pokémon 3; See Spot Run; Someo Like You; Spy Kids.

North Shore Towers
27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-22 7702) • 15 Minutes; Left Luggage; See Spot Run; Traffi

Opening

Screening Beauty

How to Kill Your Neighbor's Dog, starring Robin Wright Penn and Kenneth Branagh, is just one of the overlooked independent films screening at the **7th Avignon/New York Film Festival** at the French Institute. As part of this transatlantic interchange, French and American movies will compete for the Avignon Oscar, called the Roger, and competitors include two films—*The Sleepy Time Gal* (pictured) and *Let the Devil Wear Black*—starring Jacqueline Bisset, who will also be on hand for a five-picture retrospective. "*Sleepy Time Gal* is the thrill I've been looking for as an actress," Bisset, the cross-cultural screen goddess who's traded Europe for L.A., says. "My last part this good was in *Rich and Famous*"—twenty years ago. The festival opens April 16. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Photograph by Vette Dennis

Plaza
103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) • Along Came a Spider; Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; Pokémon 3.

UA Astoria
28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) • Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You.

UA Brandon Cinema
70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • Exit Wounds; The Tailor of Panama.

UA Crossbay
94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • Along Came a Spider; The Brothers; Pokémon 3.

UA Crossbay II
92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • Blow; Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

UA Midway
108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) • Blow; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Enemy at the Gates; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

UA Movies at Bayside
38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) • Along Came a Spider; Enemy at the Gates; Someone Like You; Tomcats.

UA Movieworld
242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • Blow; Exit Wounds; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon 3; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

Staten Island

Atrium
680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • Along Came a Spider; Bridget Jones's Diary; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Enemy at the Gates; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Pokémon 3; See Spot Run; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats; Traffic.

UA Hylan Plaza
107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) • Along Came a Spider; Heartbreakers; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

UA Movies at Staten Island
141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • Along Came a Spider; Blow; Enemy at the Gates; Exit Wounds; 15 Minutes; Heartbreakers; Just Visiting; Someone Like You; Spy Kids; Tomcats.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image
36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077) • "Composing for Film." 4/14: *Altered States* (1980). 4/15: *Barton Fink* (1991).

BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn. (718-623-2770). • "Breaking the Rules: the Cinema of Lars von Trier." 4/12–4/13: *The Idiots* (1998). 4/14: *Zentropa* (1991). 4/15: *The Kingdom II* (1997).

Film Society of Lincoln Center
65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600) • 4/12: *When Father Was Away on Business* (1985).

French Institute
22 E. 60th St. (212-355-6100) • "The Avignon Film Festival." 4/16: Hunchback of Notre Dame (1923). 4/17: Day For Night (1973); Let the Devil Wear Black (1999). 4/18: The Ceremony (1996); The Sleepy Time Gal (2000).

Guggenheim Museum
1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-423-3587) • "Conversations Between Shadows and Light: Italian Cinematography." 4/11: *Radio Days* (1986). 4/13: *Red Desert* (1964).

The Screening Room
54 Varick St., just below Canal. (212-334-2100) • "Artistic License Films Retrospective." 4/11: *Sound and Fury* (2000); *The Wife* (1996). 4/12: *Cold Fever* (1996); *After Life* (1999).

On the Set

The rest of SoHo is still crawling out of bed on an overcast Thursday morning, but the crew of *Igby Goes Down* is already busy at Felix, a bistro on Grand Street. A dazed-looking **Jeff Goldblum** dashes out of a dumpy van, wearing a pressed navy suit. "I'm like Coco Chanel," he says. "A different outfit in every shot!" Inside, the crew crowds the bar, shooting a scene in which Goldblum's character, D.H., meets a drugged-out Rachel (**Amanda Peet**) for dinner. "This is not intended to be a blockbuster," explains Goldblum. "This film is a special thing—it's an attempt with integrity."

The bleak story follows the flight of Igby (**Kieran Culkin**) as he runs away from home, comes to New York, and falls in with the wrong crowd. "If *The Catcher in the Rye* were a movie, it would feel like this," says **Lisa Tornell**, the producer. "These are parts actors would kill for—it's a delicious script."

Later, the crew moves to a loft at Howard and Broadway, where they prepare a scene in which **Bill Irwin** comes in search of Igby, but finds **Jared Harris**. First-time director-writer **Burr Steers**—whom you may recognize as the doomed couch-dweller John Travolta blew away in *Pulp Fiction*—is remarkably at ease in his director's chair. (Goldblum once taught him in acting class, making this shoot a strange role reversal.) The film also features **Susan Sarandon**, **Claire Danes**, **Ryan Phillippe**, and **Bill Pullman.** "I'm surrounded with great people," Steers explains. "It's amazing to write something and have these great actors bring it to life. Mind-boggling, actually." Less awestruck is Culkin, who, with only a small part to shoot today, flops around on a bed off-camera, eats breakfast, and leans against the wall like a bored teenager. But then again, maybe he's just getting in character. United Artists will distribute *Igby Goes Down*. No release date has been set. SARA CARDACE

Solutions to last week's puzzles

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Photographs: top, Robin Platzer Twin Images; bottom, Paul Skipper/Globe Photos.

Edited by Logan Hill

Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer
A new musical based on the novel. $35–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/26 opening. • Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).

Bells Are Ringing
Faith Prince and Mark Kudisch star in the first Broadway revival of this 1956 musical comedy about a telephone operator who falls in love with a frustrated playwright. $50–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/12 opening. • Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Blast!
Feeling horny? $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/17 opening. Through 6/10. • Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).

42nd Street
Come and meet those dancin' feet. This revival of the Al Dubin and Harry Warren musical is directed by Mark Bramble with choreography by Randy Skinner and features Michael Cumpsty, Christine Ebersole, David Elder, Jonathan Freeman, Kate Levering, and Mary Testa. $20–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/4 for a 5/2 opening. • Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).

The Gathering
Hal Linden (*The Rothschilds, I'm Not Rappaport*) stars as a Holocaust survivor in Arje Shaw's new political drama about a family's three generations. $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/10 for a 4/25 opening. • Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

King Hedley II
August Wilson (*Jitney, Fences*) returns with the latest entry in his cycle of plays concerning African American life in the twentieth century. This time, he tackles 1985 Pittsburgh with his longtime collaborator and director Marion McClinton, *Kiss Me Kate* vet Brian Stokes Mitchell, Charles Brown, Viola Davis, Lou Myers, Monté Russell, and Leslie Uggams. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/10 for a 4/29 opening. • Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200).

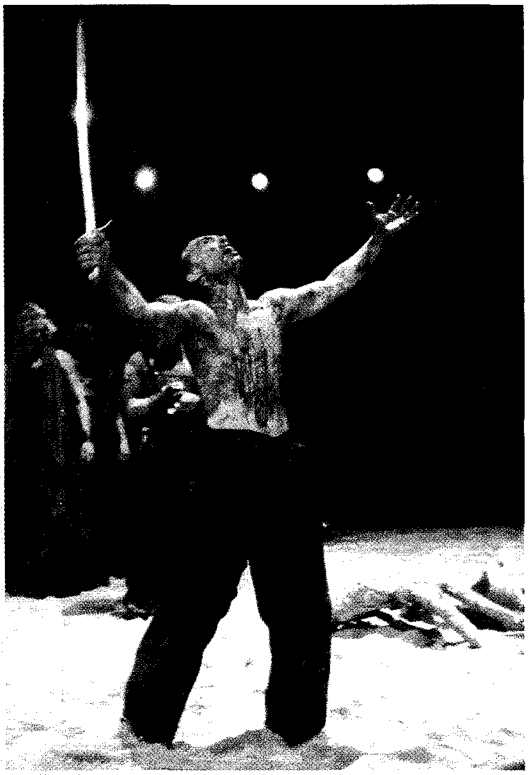
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
Terry Kinney takes his Steppenwolf Theater production of Ken Kesey's classic to Broadway. Gary Sinise stars as McMurphy. $30–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. • Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Producers
Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick produce the ultimate "sure-fire flop," *Springtime for Hitler*, in Mel Brooks' new musical and sure-fire hit, based on the Oscar-winning 1968 film. Directed and choreographed by Susan Stroman. $30–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7:30. In previews for a 4/19 opening. • St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Opening

Off Bardway

"It's a little astonishing to think the first time I did this was 40 years ago," remarks Royal Shakespeare Company founder Sir Peter Hall, whose latest staging of **Troilus and Cressida** (featuring Joey Kern, with cast) will mark an unexpected debut. With more than 200 productions to his credit, he returns to New York—not to Broadway, but in order to support one of our most adventurous troupes. "I've known Jeff Horowitz and Theatre for a New Audience for a very long time," he says. "They do really difficult Shakespeare. Any theater that does *King John* and *Waste* one year and then *Saved* and *Troilus and Cressida* the next is fine by me." Though Hall's recent Denver production of *Tantalus* took nearly ten hours to unfold (and elicited rave-of-the-decade reviews), he says he's taking the opportunity to work in a smaller setting to connect with a fresh crop of American actors and designers. "I said to Jeff that I'd like to work with lighting, costume, and set designers that I've never worked with before," he says. "I wanted to meet a new generation. It's renewing the old man, partly." All but two of his cast members are unfamiliar faces, and Hall says he's happy to have it that way. "Over the past few years, I've auditioned hundreds of young American actors, and I find them to be not only extraordinarily talented but also hungry for text," he explains, "hungry to play the game of make-believe, which theater essentially is: An actor says to an audience, '*Will you imagine . . .*' " At the age of 70, Hall feeds off their energy. "There's a whole new generation out there," he says, "and after we're done at the theater, most of them go off to be waiters at six in the morning." (See "Off Broadway.") L.H.



Photograph by Ken Howard.

Now Playing

Aida
The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

Annie Get Your Gun
Reba McEntire plays Annie Oakley. $85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, and Sun. at 3. • Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).

Beauty and the Beast
Disney's beast is back (no, not the mouse). $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

Cabaret
The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Gina Gershon, Matthew Greer, and Matt McGrath (*Hedwig*). $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Chicago
It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) Belle Calaway stars. $20–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 11/14/96. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

A Class Act
The Manhattan Theatre Club's successful tribute to the life and music of that singular sensation, *A Chorus Line* lyricist Edward Kleban. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Ambassador Theatre, 219 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Contact
This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Boyd Gaines, a delightful actor and inspired amateur dancer, performs with aplomb. Backed up by a terrific ensemble, Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Design for Living
Alan Cumming and Dominic West seek the love of

Ruby's Gem

No award—Obie, Drama Desk, or Emmy—has ever got the veteran actress Ruby Dee to rest on her laurels. When the Screen Actors Guild presented Lifetime Achievement Awards to her and her husband, Ossie Davis, last month, Dee (pictured, with Toks Olagundoye) was already readying herself for the lead role in Bridgette A. Wimberly's new drama, **Saint Lucy's Eyes**. At the small but dedicated Women's Project, the longtime supporter of progressive theater will play "Grandma," an elderly woman in 1968 Memphis who performs abortions and counsels young women in her ramshackle tenement. When one client returns ten years after their first meeting, Grandma is the one who needs help. For the fiercely active Dee, this new role should be something of a stretch. In previews for an April 12 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")

Jennifer Ehle in Noël Coward's 1932 ménage à trois comedy. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Some early curtains. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

The Dinner Party

Neil Simon's unabashedly contrived new comedy features three men, two of their ex-wives, and a mysterious man who has locked them all in a Paris dining room together. Henry Winkler and John Ritter star. $45–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Follies

Before a wrecking ball transforms a once spectacular New York theater into a parking lot, ghosts and showgirls from decades past reunite for one last time in Sondheim's 1971 musical, directed by Matthew Warchus. Blythe Danner, Gregory Harrison, Judith Ivey, and Treat Williams star. $45–$90. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Fosse

A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago*. Ben Vereen and Ann Reinking star, through 4/29. $65–$80. Mon., Tues., and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Full Monty

The musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. $31–$86. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

The Invention of Love

Tom Stoppard's play follows an elderly A. E. Housman as he travels back in time and confronts his younger self. $30–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Jane Eyre

The new musical adaptation. $50–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

Ground Rules

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Judgment at Nuremberg

Based on the second trials of the Nazi war criminals, Abby Mann's new drama is directed by John Tillinger. $29.50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6280).

Kiss Me, Kate

With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Burke Moses and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the *Shrew's* Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $26–$86. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Les Misérables

What a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$85. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/12/87. • Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Lion King

This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*. (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. • New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

The Music Man

Back in 1957, Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. Susan Stroman's production has other assets as well. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $40–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).

The Phantom of the Opera

Unlike *Cats*, Andrew Lloyd Webber's other blockbuster refuses to give up the ghost. $20–$85. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Proof

David Auburn's *Proof* is what *Copenhagen* ought to be: a play about scientists whose science matters less than their humanity. Here, those of us who want their dramatic characters to be real people need not feel excluded. Robert, a world-famous mathematician who went crazy; Catherine, his mathematically brilliant but too-depressed-to-work daughter; Hal, a young math teacher going through Robert's hundred-plus confused notebooks; and Claire, Robert's older daughter and a successful actuary, are above all fascinating individuals. As for Mary-Louise Parker, her Catherine is a performance of genius. (Simon: 6/5/00.) $24–$69. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

Rent

The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème*. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

Riverdance

The Irish return. $25–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).

The Rocky Horror Show

Christopher Ashley (*Jeffrey*) directs a surreal cast in Frank N. Furter's naughty pad. Lifelong rocker Joan Jett makes her Broadway debut opposite *Rent* star Daphne Rubin-Vega, stage vet Tom Hewitt, comics Dick Cavett and Lea De Laria, and Alice Ripley of *Side Show* (very appropriate). $30–$85. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9:45, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe

Lily Tomlin returns, along with an astonishing assortment of characters led by Trudy, a homeless lady and "creative consultant to these aliens from outer space" who knows that reality is really just "a collective hunch." The solo show that makes other solo shows look like, well, solo shows, it's written and directed by Jane Wagner, Tomlin's longtime collaborator and partner. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Seussical

The struggling but optimistic musical. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).

Stones in His Pockets

Marie Jones's comedy about a small Irish village's encounter with a Hollywood crew. $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • The Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

Who would have expected from a campy downtown playwright a nicely structured, intelligently funny, satirically relevant uptown comedy? In Charles Busch's new play, the retired but still overactive allergist Dr. Ira Taub is married to Marjorie, an immobilized nervous wreck since the death of her therapist. If you seek an ideal cast, look no further. Linda Lavin, for whom the admiring Busch wrote Marjorie as, he says, a kind of King Lear, is that and more. (Simon:

Photograph by Martha Holmes.

Opening

One-Man Band

Lackawanna, a small upstate town near Buffalo, may not be the first locale featured in any history of the blues, but that doesn't mean it's any less important to Ruben Santiago-Hudson, who grew up there. In **Lackawanna Blues**, a new solo show written by the actor, he plays more than twenty characters who move in and out of a Lackawanna boarding house to the soundtrack of blues musician Bill Sims Jr. Santiago-Hudson (pictured, right, with Sims) should be comfortable with the twelve-bar progression: He won a Tony for playing the best friend of a bluesman in August Wilson's *Seven Guitars*. In previews for an April 14 opening at the Public Theater. (See "Off Broadway.")

3/13/00.) Also starring Tony Roberts and Michele Lee. $30–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Crimes of the Heart
The first major revival of Beth Henley's play in two decades. $35–$50. Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/16 opening. Through 5/14. • Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).

Dead Eye Boy
Angus MacLachlan's new drama about a fractured family and the drug addictions and violence that bring them together features indie darling Lili Taylor. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. Previews begin 4/10 for a 4/22 opening. Through 5/5. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-727-7765).

Dralion
Cirque du Soleil returns with its latest high-falutin' version of the high-flying circus. $43.75–$85. Tues. and Wed. at 8, Thurs. and Fri. at 5 and 9, Sat. at 4 and 8, Sun. at 1 and 5. In previews for a 4/12 opening. • Liberty State Park, Jersey City (800-678-5440).

Eli's Comin'
A musical inspired by the music of Laura Nyro, by co-creators Diane Paulus (*The Donkey Show*) and Diedre Murray (*Running Man*). $15–$49. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. Previews begin 4/11 for a 5/3 opening. • Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (212-353-0303).

The Good Thief
Brian d'Arcy James (*The Wild Party*) stars in Conor McPherson's recently extended drama. $25–$45. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 4. Through 5/27. • 45 Bleecker, 45 Bleecker St. (212-529-4530).

Lackawanna Blues
Ruben Santiago-Hudson's solo show. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 4/14 opening. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Love, Janis
A new bio-musical based on the book *Love, Janis* by Joplin's sister Laura. $30–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/22 opening. • Village Theater, 158 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

Madame Melville
Macaulay Culkin rides some flattering raves back to town after a successful London run in Richard Nelson's drama about a student who's hot for teacher. $60–$65. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/23 opening. • Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).

The Misanthrope
A new translation of Molière's work by Rod McLucas. $15–$40. Call for schedule. In previews for a 4/20 opening. Through 5/27. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Once a Man, Twice a Boy
Joe Lucas presents a solo show that tracks his life from his days in Pennsylvania anthracite mines to his hours at the bedside of his dying father. $30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/11 opening. Through 5/13. • Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. (212-206-1515).

Saint Lucy's Eyes
Ruby Dee stars in Bridgette A. Wimberly's new play. $36. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/12 opening. • Women's Project Theatre, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).

Troilus and Cressida
The esteemed founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Sir Peter Hall, directs Off Broadway for the first time. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 4/15 opening. • American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Uncle Bob
A dark comedy by Austin Pendleton about a man and his nephew. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Previews begin 4/11 for a 4/23 opening • *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).*

Now Playing

American Rhapsody
A musical revue of Gershwin's works. $40–$55. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. • Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (212-239-6200).

Bat Boy: The Musical
Bold-faced headlines in the *Weekly World News* declaring the capture of a live bat-child led to the creation of this high-flying musical. $20–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun at 7:30. • Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-4100).

Blue Man Group: Tubes
Smart silliness. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. • Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

The Book of Liz
In this wacky new play from David and Amy Sedaris, an unappreciated nun with a cheeseball fetish takes a road trip. $35. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10. Through 5/20. • Greenwich House Theatre, 27 Barrow St. (212-239-6200).

Boy Gets Girl
A strange tale of stalking in the city by controversial playwright Rebecca Gilman (*Spinning Into Butter*). $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Cartas: A Nun in Love
Based on *Les Lettres d'une Religieuse Portugaise* and translated and performed by Myriam Cyr, this show tells the true story of a nun in seventeenth-century Portugal who is seduced and abandoned by a French cavalry officer. $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 4. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

Code of the West
Mark R. Giesser wrote and directs this comedy about Joshua A. Norton, who proclaimed himself Emperor of the United States in 1859 San Francisco. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway (212-279-4200).

De La Guarda
A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

Dinner With Friends
Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) Winner of the Pulitzer Prize. $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show
A fantastic, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. Cable sex icon Robin Byrd hosts on Wednesdays. $39. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Downhearted Blues—*The Life and Music of* Bessie Smith
Tony- and Grammy-winning Jennifer Holliday wrote and stars in this musical one-act. $30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. • Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-561-9553).

Eula Mae's Beauty, Bait, and Tackle
Former rodeo star Eula Mae sets up shop in a small town. $40. Mon.–Sat. at 8. • Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

The Fantasticks
The musical perennial. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. • Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).

Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey
Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-run-

Photograph by Michal Daniel.

ning musical spoof. $49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. • Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).

Fully Committed
For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. Smartly directed by Nicholas Martin, this play is a day in the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star restaurant where table 31 seems to be the ne plus ultra of socio-gastronomic achievement. (Simon: 1/17/00.) Now starring Christopher Fitzgerald (*Saturday Night*). $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change
They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 8/1/96. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

I Will Bear Witness
This world premiere dramatizes the diaries of Victor Klemperer, a German Jew whose life was spared during Hitler's reign. $15–$25. Call for schedule. • Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (212-677-4210).

In Dreams and Gimpel
David Margulies stars in the adaptation of two stories from Isaac Bashevis Singer and Delmore Schwartz. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. • The Maverick Theater, 307 W. 26th St. (212-239-6200).

Late Nite Catechism
Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun. $40. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Let A Hundred Flowers Bloom
David Zellnik's new comedy. $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8. • Center Stage, 48 W. 21st St.

Lobby Hero
Soon after making the year's best movie, *You Can Count On Me,* Kenneth Lonergan delights us with his irrepressible *Lobby Hero,* confirming him as a comic wizard. To have written those and the unforgettable *This Is Our Youth* would have lasted many authors a lifetime, but with Lonergan we get the feeling of a life force just getting into full swing. (Simon: 3/26/01.) $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun at 3 and 7:30. Through 4/15. • Playwrights Horizons' Anne G. Wilder Theater, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).

The London Cuckolds
Women are on top in Edward Ravenscroft's comedy. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7. • Blue Heron Arts Center, 123 E. 24th St. (212-290-1595).

Maybe, Baby It's You
Playwright-performers Shari Simpson and Charlie Shanian play eleven couples in this romantic comedy. $40. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. at 10. • Theater at St. Luke's, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

The Misanthrope
A new translation written and directed by Rod McLucas. $15–$40. Call for schedule. Through 5/27. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Mnemonic
This 1999 London Drama Critics Award winner by Theatre de Complicite looks to be an experimental theater addict's delight. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat and Sun. at 2, Sun at 7. • John Jay College Theater, 899 Tenth Ave., near 58th St. (212-239-6200).

Naked Boys Singing
Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

No Niggers, No Jews, No Dogs
John Henry Redwood's new play. $40–$45. Wed.–Mon. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. • Primary Stage, 354 W. 45th St. (212-333-4052).

Now That Communism Is Dead, My Life Feels Empty
Richard Foreman (*Bad Boy Nietzsche*) directs Tony Torn and Jay Smith. $15. Tues. and Fri.–Sun. at 8. Through 4/29. • Ontological Theatre at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-533-4650).

Nuyorican Voices
Celebrating its thirty-fifth anniversary, Intar offers the premiere of three plays by award-winning Latino playwrights (José Rivera, Edwin Sanchez, and Migdalia Cruz) performed in repertory. $20 for one show, $45 for all three. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 4/22. • Intar 53 Theatre, 508 W. 53rd. (212-279-4200).

Our Sinatra
A tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes. $50–$100. Mon.–Wed., Fri., and Sun. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. • Reprise Room at Dylan's, 245 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

P.S. 69
Gay substitute teacher by day, exotic dancer by night. Susan Jeremy stars in this comedy about her experiences in a New York public school. $25. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Through 4/29. • Theatre-Studio, Inc., 750 Eighth Ave., at 46th St. (212-279-4200).

Passion Play
A middle-aged couple is seduced by a young woman in this comedy by Peter Nichols. $25–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. • Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta La. (212-307-4100).

The Peking Acrobats
Unicycles, spinning plates, and more. $10–$25. Call for schedule. Through 4/22. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

The Picture of Dorian Gray
Joe O'Byrne's new adaptation of Oscar Wilde's classic. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 5/6. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd. St. (212-727-2737).

The Play About the Baby
Tony winner Marian Seldes (*A Delicate Balance*) and Brian Murray star in Edward Albee's first new play since *Three Tall Women*. $25–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7. • Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).

References to Salvadore Dalí Make Me Hot
Rosie Perez and the intense John Ortiz star in the New York premiere of José Rivera's imagistic new play. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Servicemen
Two night crawlers in World War II era New York fight for the attention of departing servicemen. $25–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).

Six Goumbas and a Wannabe
Vincent Gogliormella's new comedy. $37.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Cap 21 Theater (212-239-6200).

A Skull in Connemara
The Roundabout Theatre Company presents the second episode of the "Leenane" trilogy by the talented playwright Martin McDonagh. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. Through 5/20. • Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-307-4100).

Stomp
As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $29.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

The Subject Was Roses
The revival of Frank D. Gilroy's Pulitzer Prize–winning drama. $15–$40. Call for schedule. Through 4/29. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

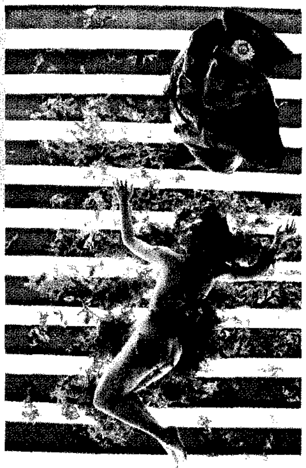
Summer Cyclone
Nela Wagman's new drama. $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. (212-247-4982).

The Syringa Tree
Pamela Gien plays 28 characters in a superb solo show

Onstage

Multi-Culti

Because the dot-com bust hasn't affected the theater—yet—two of the season's most promising multimedia works will still hit the stage this week. At the Kitchen, a talented range of theater folk, including playwright Mac Wellman (*Fnu Lnu, Hypatia)* and director Bob McGrath (*Carbon Copy Building*), stage an exploration of the life and works of the fascinating outsider artist Henry Darger in **Jennie Richee** (cast pictured, top). Meanwhile, in Brooklyn's DUMBO, the promising but hit-or-miss experimental theater troupe GAle GAtes et al. presents **So Long Ago I Can't Remember** (featuring Brian Bickerstaff and Michelle Stern, right), a 40,000-square-foot series of thirteen hellish installations that casts audience members as self-navigating Dantes. Those who consider performance art to be its own circle of the Inferno may feel oddly comforted. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")



Photographs: top, William Murray/Ridge Theater; bottom, www.galegates.org.

about a young girl who tries to come to terms with life in sixties South Africa. $49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).

Ten Unknowns
In the latest offering from Jon Robin Baitz, Donald Sutherland plays a seventysomething painter whose hermitage in Mexico is disturbed by three visitors: Justin Kirk, Julianna Margulies, and Denis O'Hare. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8., Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Theater of Light
The return of the legendary "light artist" Rudi Stern's "visual fantasia." $20. Wed. and Sun. at 8, Thurs.–Sat. at 8 and 10. Through 4/14. • Flamboyan Theatre, 107 Suffolk St. (212-279-4200).

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding
A wedding and reception, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and, with more than 4,000 performances, it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $67.50–$80. Thurs.–Sun. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St., and Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Up Against the Wind
Michael Develle Winn's new play about the life of the late rapper Tupac Shakur. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 2 and 7. • New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-239-6200).

Urban Zulu Mambo
A collection of short works by Kia Corthron, Suzan-Lori Parks, Ntozake Shange, and Regina Taylor exploring issues like homelessness and love, as performed by author-actress Taylor. $47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

The Vagina Monologues
Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

What You Will
The innovative Moonwork Theater Company returns with a swipe at *Twelfth Night*. $19. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 3. • Connelly Theater, 220 E. 4th St. (212-279-4200).

A Will of His Own/Andromache
The irrepressible servant Crispin infuriates his tyrant and master in Michael Feingold's new translation of the Jean-Françoise Regnard 1708 comedy./Jean Racine's first successful play. $28–$35. Call for schedule. Performances in repertory through 6/17. • Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).

Off-Off Broadway

Jennie Richee
A talented range of theater folk, including Mac Wellman (*Fnu Lnu*) and director Bob McGrath, stage a multimedia exploration into the life and works of Henry Darger. $20. Call for schedule. Through 4/14. • The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793).

Possessed
Based on Dostoevsky's novel, a musical play with dance and puppets by Robert Lyons and Kristin Marting (HERE's executive director and co-founder). $15. Wed.–Sun. at 8:30. Through 4/21. • HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (212-647-0202).

So Long Ago I Can't Remember
GAle GAtes (*Field of Mars, 1839*) presents a new work. $20–$25. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30. Opens 4/11. • GAle GAtes, 37 Main St., Brooklyn (718-522-4597).

Urinetown
John Rando directs John Collum and other theater vets in an absurdist musical comedy reminiscent of the B-grade sci-fi flick *Ice Pirates*, in which water is worth its weight in gold. $25. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 5/13. • American Theater of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Art

Edited by Edith Newhall

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Nicole Charbonnet
Paintings of images that suggest the memory of a place or an event; through 5/12. • Winston Wächter Mayer, 39 E. 78th St. (212-327-2526).

Jean Dubuffet
Late paintings by the French artist; through 4/28. • Werner, 4 E. 77th St. (212-988-1623).

Dan Flavin/Donald Judd
A two-gallery exhibition of sculpture and works on paper by both Minimalist artists; through 5/25. • At Castelli, 59 E. 79th St. (212-249-4470), and Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (212-925-4338).

Suzan Frecon
Recent abstract paintings; through 4/28. • Markey, 42 E. 76th St. (212-517-9892).

Graham Nickson/Jilaine Jones
New paintings of landscapes and figures by the director of the New York Studio School/Sculptures in plaster, wood, and iron that suggest a narrative or chanced-upon environment. Through 4/28. • Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606).

Jim Peters
New constructions inspired by the artist's travels in the south of France; through 4/28. • CDS, 76 E. 79th St. (212-772-9555).

Peter Reginato
New abstract painted-steel sculptures; through 4/28. • Adelson, the Mark Hotel, 25 E. 77th St. (212-439-6800).

Grace Roselli
Graphite portraits that focus on their subjects' inscrutability; through 4/28. • Friedman, 980 Madison Ave. (212-472-1527).

Jonathan Santlofer
Recent drawings and paintings of Dada and Surrealist artists, and of fictional narratives staged at Andy Warhol's Factory; through 4/28. • Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (212-535-5767).

Sean Scully
Recent paintings and photographs on the theme of light and gravity; through 4/28. • Knoedler & Company, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

Houghton Cranford Smith
Landscape paintings by the American artist (1887–1983) who abandoned Impressionism in 1930 for the Purist style of his French mentors Amédée Ozenfant and André L'hote; through 5/12. • York, 21 E. 65th St. (212-772-9155).

Gerard Titus-Carmel
Recent collages and paintings from the series, "Ouartiers d'Hiver"; through 4/28. • Cadé, 1045 Madison Ave. (212-737-7206).

57th Street Area

Adele Alsop
Paintings of the desert of southern Utah; through 4/28. • Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-1122).

Joe Andoe
Recent, mostly monochromatic paintings of landscapes in the artist's native Oklahoma; through 5/5. • Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (212-245-2888).

Dale Chihuly
A selection of the artist's glass works; through 5/5. • Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900).

Will Cotton
New paintings of close-up views of desserts; through 5/5. • Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-752-2929).

Marcel Duchamp
Objects, texts, photographs, and drawings dating from the 1920s to the 1960s that trace the artist's preoccupation with the display, collection, and exhibition of art; through 5/5. • Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

Joan Hernández Pijuan
Heavily impastoed monochromatic paintings with drawings scratched into their surfaces; through 4/28. • Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-9090).

Valerie Hird
Paintings that weave images of landscapes and textile patterns; through 4/28. • Haime, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-3550).

Glen Holland/Robert Ferrandini
New small-scale paintings of household objects/Imaginary landscapes. Through 4/28. • Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (212-759-2345).

Barbara Kassel
Paintings on panels, painted boxes and bottles that navigate viewers into a hushed, meditative realm; through 4/28. • Davidson, 41 E. 57th St. (212-759-7555).

Roxy Paine
New art-making machines that produce unique works of art; through 5/5. • Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171).

Nigel Van Wieck
Oil pastels that depict New Yorkers dancing in the Swing era; through 4/28. • Beadleston, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-581-7544).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Haluk Akakçe
An animated walk-in painting that transports the viewer into a fusion of painting, video, and architecture; through 4/28. • Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Robert Barry
Early conceptual works from the sixties and seventies; through 5/2. • Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. (212-807-9494).

Anselme Boix-Vives
Paintings of exotic animals and birds in fantastic landscapes by a Spanish-born self-taught artist (1899–1969) who strove to create images of peace and joy; through 5/25. • Ross, 568 Broadway (212-343-2161).

Carmen Cicero
Recent paintings that imbue ordinary cityscapes and landscapes with a dreamlike aura; through 5/1. • Kelly, 591 Broadway (212-226-1660).

Brett Cook-Dizney
Spray-painted self-portraits, each of which documents a different stage of the artist's childhood; through 5/12. • P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Ron Ehrlich
New paintings that depict traces of the human figure; through 5/1. • Haller, 560 Broadway (212-219-2500).

Dan Flavin/Donald Judd
A two-gallery exhibition of sculpture and works on paper by both artists; through 5/25. • At Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (212-925-4338), and Castelli, 59 E. 79th St. (212-925-4338).

Tamara Gonzales
A mixed-media installation influenced by East Asian and Mexican vernacular decoration; through 4/28. • Pelavin, 13 Jay St. (212-925-9424).

Richard Kalina
New paintings and drawings of patterns constructed in sequential procedures of mark-making, collaging, masking, removing, and painting; through 4/21. • Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (212-941-0012).

Ground Rules

Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Lucy MacKenzie/John Okulick
Paintings, drawings, and assemblages/New wall sculptures. Through 5/2. • Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

Renee Stout/Stephen Greene
Recent mixed-media paintings/Drawings. Through 4/28. • Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-219-2863).

Bill Saylor
Paintings that mix images of logos, tabloid headlines, and texts from scientific journals with swaths of gestural abstraction; through 4/28. • Koenig, 359 Broadway (212-334-9255).

Diana Thater
Video wall projections that depict birds, trees, and flowers opposite to their actual size; through 5/5. • Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-9074).

Ian Wilson/Robert Ryman
Reliefs made between 1966 and 1969 that have not been previously exhibited, a chalk circle drawn directly on the gallery's floor, and a series of handmade books/Paintings executed between 1965 and 1985. Through 6/2. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

Terry Winters
Sixty new paintings from the series "Set Diagram" displayed in a site-specific installation by the architect Rem Koolhaas; through 4/28. • Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Chelsea

Robert Beck
New drawings; through 5/5. • CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-966-4360).

Bruce Bosnan/Bill Komoski
Painted constructions/Graphic abstract paintings; 4/12–5/12. • Feature, 530 W. 25th St. (212-675-7772).

Frédéric Bruly Bouabré
The first New York gallery exhibition of the 80-year-old Ivory Coast artist's poetic colored drawings that reflect his life and the people around him, including photographs of Bouabré by the French photographer Philippe Bordas; through 4/22. • Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

Barbara Broughel
New installations, sculptures, paintings, and drawings from the series "Perspective, Optics and the Legibility of Nature" that evoke the life of an eighteenth-century Dutch female scientist-experimenter; through 5/5. • Taylor, 535 W. 22nd St. (646-230-0992).

Mary Carlson/Hilary Harkness
Recent sculpture inspired by the undersea world/Paintings of interiors populated only by female characters. Through 5/5. • Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (212-741-3318).

Steve DiBenedetto
Paintings in which helipcopters, octopi, and Ferris wheels occupy what appear to be endlessly morphing amusement-park-like environments; through 5/2. • Baumgartner, 418 W. 15th St. (212-633-2276).

Joanne Greenbaum
Paintings that depict circles, spirals, lines, and blocks of color that undermine the sense of gravity associated with the history of painting; through 4/28. • D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

Fariba Hajamadi
An installation of a museum space that serves as a self-portrait of the artist; through 5/12. • Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. (212-462-2668).

Rachel Harrison
A cardboard maze containing photographs that document a house in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, in which the Virgin Mary was said to have appeared in an upstairs window; through 4/27. • Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. (212-463-7770).

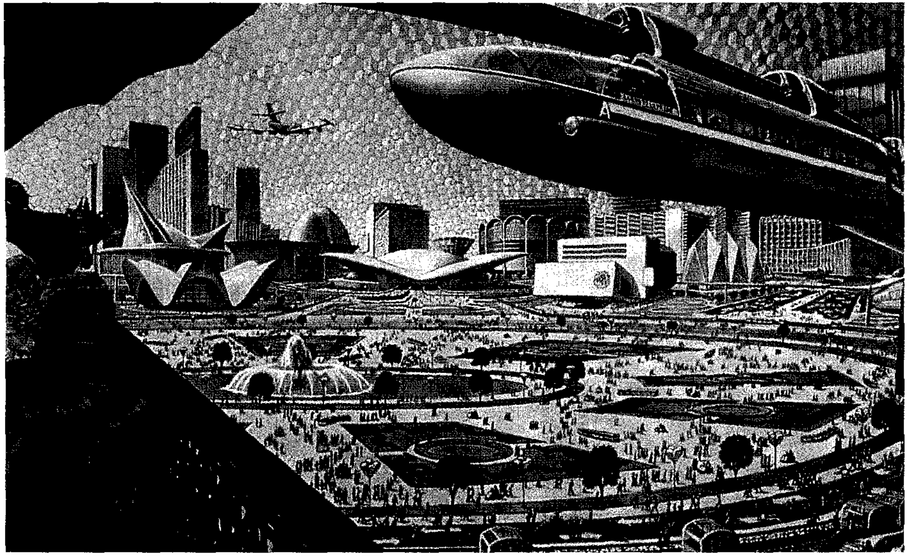
Surasi Kusolwong
An installation titled *New York Night Market (chaos minimal)* that allows visitors to purchase Thai household products; through 5/5. • Lombard-Freid, 531 W. 26th St. (212-967-8040).

Sean Landers/Lee Friedlander
Large-scale paintings utilizing imagery from four of Picasso's epic paintings/Photographic portraits of individuals taken over a 40-year period, including images of John Szarkowski, Garry Winogrand, R. B. Kitaj, and the photographer's family; 4/12–5/19. • Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Opening

The Last Next Big Thing

The sixties killed the future, in a manner of speaking. Until the counterculture's version of utopia—do your own thing, get back to the land, clean up the Earth—came along and took the prognosticatory lead, Americans imagined the dawning age would embrace every kind of wonderful, horrific technology. There would be flying cars, spotless domed cities, and lots and lots of monorails. And someone—Eisenhower? Big Brother? Mr. Spacely?—would be *running the show,* programming the computers to make all the right decisions. **Out of Time: Designs for the 20th-Century Future**, a Smithsonian exhibit coming this week to the New-York Historical Society, shows us the brave new world that might have been, in images dating from 1899 to 1961. Of course, they say more about their times than about ours (even in the most outlandish fifties schemes, the guys have crew cuts and the women have Donna Reed–esque home permanents). The Victorian tech revolution depended upon a lot of hot-air balloons, since, of course, how else could we take to the skies? What's most striking in the end, though, is how thoroughly we as a culture have decided to let the future go. Planners today focus on the short term, the achievable, the disappointingly pragmatic. Even the most fervent and feverish tech visionaries of today are grounded in market forces and theories of personal empowerment. They have nothing on the rotogravure future that was. CHRISTOPHER BONANOS



Photograph courtesy of The New-York Historical Society.

Hector Leonardi
Abstract paintings; through 4/28. • Steele, 547 W. 27th St. (212-736-5565).

Sherrie Levine/Donald Judd
New paintings on aluminum panels that depict grids of alternating red and gray squares/A large plywood sculpture from 1975. Through 4/28. • Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Damian Loeb
New paintings that depict figures in dark, mysterious circumstances; through 5/5. • Boone, 541 W. 24th St. (212-752-2929).

David Lowe
Paintings of Italian landscapes; through 4/28. • Coploff, 508 W. 26th St. (212-741-1149).

Kristin Lucas
A two-channel video installation, *Involuntary Reception,* about a young woman whose mind and body are inhabited by unusually large levels of electromagnetivity; through 5/5. • Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (212-727-3323).

Beverly Pepper
New stone sculptures; through 4/28. • Marlborough Chelsea, 211 W. 19th St. (212-463-8634).

Walter Pichler
New sculptures, architectural models, and drawings; through 5/5. • Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Ilona Rich
Carnivalesque sculptures painted with stripes, and portraits culled from mass media, plus a line of surreal clothing of the artist's own design; through 4/28. • Mansion, 547 W. 27th St. (212-505-7055).

Jenny Scobel
Pencil drawings of pensive women against background scenes culled from cartoons of the thirties and forties; through 4/28. • Erben, 516 W. 20th St. (212-645-8701).

Andrew Spence
Recent abstract paintings whose emblematic forms are distilled from commonplace architecture and design; through 5/5. • Thorp, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-6565).

Marnie Weber
Video installations, large-scale collage, and costumes

that tell the story of a princess who is forever in waiting; through 4/28. • Fredericks Freiser, 504 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6555).

Terry Winters
Drawings executed over the past five years that continue the artist's interest in exploring and mapping complex kinds of order, chaos, gravity, and speed through the abstract use of color, line, and volume; through 4/28. • Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Betty Woodman
Two new large-scale ceramic installations; through 4/28. • Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

Other

Tobi Kahn
Paintings, drawings, and sculptures that depict forms based on heads; through 4/26. • Pratt Institute, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-3517).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Roth Horowitz
Photographic book-works from the seventies by Araki, Boltanski, Dimitrijevic, Gilbert & George, Le Gac, others; through 4/28. • 160a E. 70th St. (212-717-9067).

Sculpture Center
"Once, Then Something," sculpture that incorporates ephemeral elements, by Brandmeier, Finch, Pétursson, Signer, Zausner; through 4/28. •

57th Street Area

D C Moore
"Self-Made Men: Male Self Portraits," works by Bates, Close, Crumb, Kitaj, Pearlstein, Spiegelman, Winkfield, others; through 5/5. • 724 Fifth Ave. (212-247-2111).

PaineWebber
"Tibet: Mountains and Valleys, Castles and Tents From the Newark Museum Collection," an exhibition exploring the ancient culture of Tibet through rare artifacts and documentary materials; 4/12–6/22. • 1285 Sixth Ave. (212-713-2885), Mon.-Fri. 8-6.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Bridgewater/Lustberg & Blumenfeld
"Reconsidering the Renaissance," paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculpture by Barsness, Boody, Buh, Golden, O'Reilly, Pujol, Sharrett, others; through 4/28. • 560 Broadway (212-941-6355).

Exit Art
Works in various media that explore the notion of danger, by Chambers, Green, Morales, MacMurtrie, Seubert, others; through 5/19. • 548 Broadway (212-966-7745).

Gering
"Perfect 10: Ten Years in SoHo," the gallery's final exhibition in its SoHo space before relocating to Chelsea in May, featuring works by Kauffman, Halley, McCaslin, Schachter, Simon, Tremblay, others; through 4/21. • 476 Broome St. (212-226-8195).

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer, Inc.
Works by Lamb, McGovern, Romero; through 4/21. • 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956).

Kempner
"Minimalennialism," a collection of the twenty-first century's most celebrated Minimalists, including works from Ellsworth Kelly, Sol Lewitt, Julia Mangold, Wes Mills, and others; through 5/5. • 501 W. 23rd St. (212-206-6872).

Other

CUNY Graduate Center
"Elective Affinities: Prints by Manet and Goya." An exhibition examining the role played by printmaking in the oeuvres of Goya and Manet, featuring etching and lithographs from the collections of the Arthur Ross Foundation and the New York Public Library; through 4/27. • 365 Fifth Ave. (212-817-7170).

Photography

Oliver Boberg
Images of "skies" constructed by the artist from cotton, dry ice, and Plexiglas sheets; through 4/28. • Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. (212-727-2752).

Bill Brandt
A retrospective of vintage prints by the English photographer (1904–83) whose work included photojournalism, portraiture, abstracted nudes, and landscapes; through 5/5. • Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-750-7070

Marjorie Content
Photographs taken between 1931 and 1935 on trips to Bermuda and New Mexico with Georgia O'Keeffe; through 4/28. • Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-6780).

De Lellis
Photographs by Peter Moore documenting the demolition of Penn Station between 1963 and 1966, and group of photographs showing the construction of Grand Central Station between 1911 and 1912 that were recently discovered in the estate of Eben Robison, an engineer who worked for Balcom & Darrow, a firm involved in the station's construction; through 5/12. • 47 E. 68th St. (212-327-1482).

Mitch Epstein
Photographs of Americans in recreation, dating from the seventies to the present; through 4/28. • Sikkema Private View, 504 W. 22nd St. (646-336-5353), Wed.-Sat. 11-6.

Candida Hofer
Large-scale square photographs that document the physical and historic layers of public buildings; through 5/15. • Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. (212-627-1018).

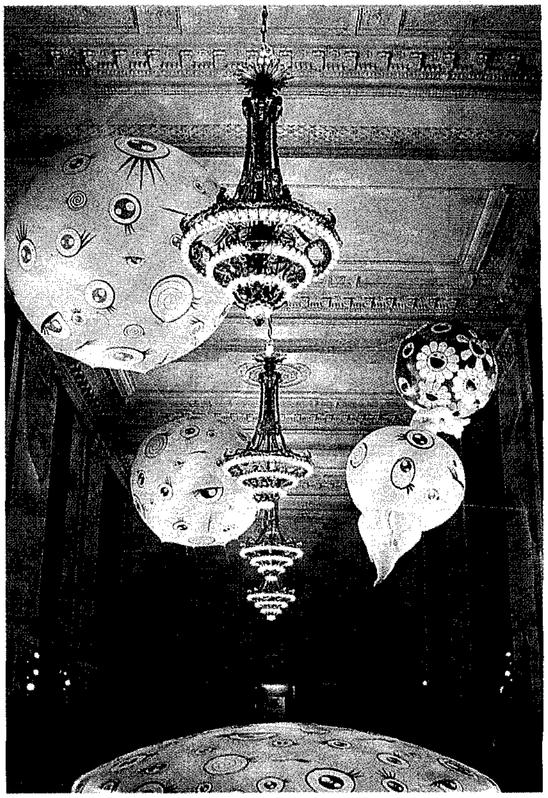
ICP
"Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer." A survey of photographs and works in other media from the twenties and thirties by the Surrealist known for his erotic, lifelike images of dolls; through 6/10. • "Kiki Smith: Telling Tales." The first museum exhibition devoted exclusively to the artist's photographs, digital prints, and video projections; through 6/10. • "Dear Friends: American Photographs of Men Together, 1840–1918." Daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, and early paper prints whose images of men together suggest a surprisingly broadminded attitude toward intimacy between men; through 6/10. • 1133 Ave. of the Americas (212-860-1777).

Kraus
British paper negatives dating from 1839 to 1864; through 5/4. • The Mark Hotel, 25 E. 77th St. (212-794-2064).

Installation

Air Time

No, you are not seeing escapees from a Macy's parade. The monumental balloons festooned with eyeballs, flowers, and a Buddha-like figure that are suspended near the ceiling of Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall are part of **Takashi Murakami**'s "Wink," a project presented by MTA Arts for Transit and Creative Time that includes two immense inflated floor sculptures. Downtown, at Marianne Boesky Gallery, the Japanese artist known for his "Superflat" style—a hybrid of animation, high-tech computer imagery, and traditional Japanese painting—is showing his latest paintings, in which brightly colored graphic mushrooms and flowers reveal their true personalities through sweet or menacing facial features. At Grand Central Terminal, Park Avenue and 42nd Street, through April 13; and Marianne Boesky Gallery, 535 West 22nd Street, through April 14.



Photograph by CharlieSamuels.com, courtesy of Creative Time.

Lee Friedlander
Photographs of children, among them the photographer's own grandchildren; 4/15–5/14. • Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

Maggie Taylor/Charles Harbutt
Digital ink-jet prints of surreal still lifes, narratives, and portraits/Black-and-white photographs that capture people in fleeting moments. Through 5/19. • Miller, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-3930).

Steven Pippin
Recent black-and-white self-portraits; through 5/5. • Brown's Enterprise, 436 W. 15th St. (212-627-5258).

Liz Rideal

Collages of original photo-booth strips that the artist enlarges; through 4/28. • Schoormans, 508 W. 26th St. (212-243-3159).

Thomas Roma

Recent photographs from the series "Seen and Unseen" that contrast the rural landscape with the urban cityscape; through 5/5. • Meyerowitz, 580 Broadway (212-625-3434).

David Vestal

Black-and-white photographs of New York, Chicago, and Connecticut that capture still moments in otherwise restless cities; through 4/28. • Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-989-7600).

John Yang

Photographs of sepulchral portraits on old tombstones in the Mount Zion cemetery in Maspeth, Queens; through 5/15. • Stevenson, 338 W. 23rd St. (212-352-0070).

Museums

American Craft Museum

"Made in Oakland: The Furniture of Garry Knox Bennett." The first retrospective of one of America's best-known furniture-makers; through 4/29. • 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History

"The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter." More than 300 butterflies from Central, South, and North America housed in a walk-in vivarium; through 5/28. • Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.-Thurs. 10-5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10-8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

"A Family Album: Brooklyn Collects." More than 200 major artworks, ranging from antiquities to contemporary paintings, lent by collectors who have deep connections to Brooklyn; through 7/1. • "Committed to the Image: Contemporary Black Photographers." Works by 94 photographers, among them Albert Chong, Gordon Parks, Jeffrey Henson Scales, Carrie Mae Weems, and Ernest Withers; through 4/29. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000), Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Sat. of every month), Sun. 11-6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution

"Aluminum by Design: Jewelry to Jets." The first major museum exhibit to explore the role of aluminum as a catalyst for design in Europe and America; through 7/15. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dahesh Museum of Art

"Gérôme & Goupil: Art and Enterprise." An exhibition exploring the mutually advantageous partnership between the nineteenth-century painter Jean-Léon Gérôme and his art dealer/publisher Adolphe Goupil; through 5/5. • 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (212-759-0606), Tues.-Sat. 11-6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts

"Diana Thater: *Knots and Surfaces*." A large-scale multiprojection video installation that interacts with the architecture of Dia's third-floor gallery; through 1/30/02. • "Panamarenko: *Orbit*." An exhibition pairing the Belgian artist's key work, *Aeromodeller*, an experimental flying machine built in 1969–71, with a work created this year; through 6/17. • "Bridget Riley: *Reconnaissance*." The British artist's seminal paintings from the sixties and seventies in which carefully calibrated geometric patterns seem to move rhythmically across a canvas; through 6/17. • "Jorge Pardo: *Project*." A transformation of the Dia Center's 6,000-square-foot ground floor featuring colored ceramic tiles, mural paintings, glass dividers, stylish seating, increased natural light, and an expanded bookstore; through 6/17. • "Rodney Graham and Bruce Nauman: . . . *the nearest faraway place* . . ." New and earlier works by both artists that reflect their shared interests in the myth of the American West; through 6/17. • 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.–Sun. noon–6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Frick Collection

"Mantegna's *Descent Into Limbo*, From the Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection." A smaller version of Mantegna's original masterpiece that was probably painted by the artist for Ferdinand Carlo, the last duke of Mantua, around 1470–75; through 8/1. • "Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Greentree Foundation." Works by Corot, Degas, Manet, Picasso, Redon; through 7/29. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery

"The First Steps: Emerging Artists From Japan." Works by seven Japanese artists who won a competition judged by an international panel; through 4/14. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

"Hugo Boss Prize 2000: Marjetica Potrc." An installation exploring the urban condition as it manifests itself worldwide by this Slovenian artist who was awarded the Hugo Boss Prize in November 2000; through 4/29. • "The Global Guggenheim: Selections From the Extended Collection." Approximately 175 works from the museum's collection, including paintings, sculpture, and works on paper spanning Impressionism through Pop Art; through 4/22. • "Project for a New Guggenheim Museum in New York City." Architect Frank Gehry's preliminary plans and models for a new Guggenheim developed in connection with the museum's response to a Request for Proposals issued by the New York City Economic Development Corporation for the development of Piers 9, 13, and 14 on the East River in lower Manhattan; through 4/21. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500), Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $8 students and seniors.

Japan Society

"Frank Lloyd Wright and the Art of Japan: The Architect's Other Passion." Works of art and objects collected by the architect during his several sojourns in Japan, as well as drawings for architectural projects he was commissioned to build in Japan; through 7/15. • 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.-Fri. 11-6, Sat. and Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum

"Voice, Image, Gesture: Selections From the Jewish Museum's Collection, 1945–2000." More than 60 works from the museum's collection, by Diane Arbus, Tina Barney, Adolph Gottlieb, Hannah Wilke, Andy Warhol, and others; through 8/5. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200), Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11-5:45; Tues. 11-8 (Tues. after 5, pay what you wish); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

"William Blake." The first American exhibition of works in all media by the British Romantic artist (1757–1827), including drawings, paintings, prints, and illuminated books; through 6/24. • "Vermeer and the Delft School." Paintings by Johannes Vermeer, Pieter de Hooch, and other artists of the Delft School; through 5/27. • "The Treasury of Basel Cathedral." Ecclesiastical and secular objects from the Historisches Museum Basel and other European museums dating from the eleventh through the early sixteenth centuries that were originally part of the medieval treasury of the Basel Minister; through 5/27. • "William Trost Richards in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Drawings and paintings by the Philadelphia-born artist (1833–1905), depicting landscapes and marine subjects in Pennsylvania, New England, and the British Isles; through 5/13. • "Correggio and Parmigianino: Master Draftsmen of the Renaissance." More than 130 drawings from private and public collections by the two masters of the Emilian School of early-sixteenth-century Italy; through 5/6. • "Sultan 'Ali of Mashhad, Master of Nasta Liq." Examples of calligraphy by the master of *nasta liq*, the writing style likened to flying geese that was favored in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Iran for poetical texts; through 4/22. • "Photography: Processes, Preservation, and Conservation." An exhibition celebrating the museum's new Sherman Fairchild Center for Works on Paper and Photograph Conservation, exploring various photographic processes and methods of conservation; through 5/6 • "Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Chinese Paintings From the Robert H. Ellsworth Collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art"; through 8/19. • "Rain From the Moon: Silver in Ancient Peru." Approximately 130 silver objects from private and public collections in the U.S.; through 4/22. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:30, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; $10 contribution, $5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library

"Jean Poyet: Artist to the Court of Renaissance France." The first one-person show dedicated to the work of the fifteenth-century French manuscript illuminator who worked for the courts of Louis XI, Charles VIII, and Louis XII; through 5/6. • "The World Observed: Five Centuries of Drawings From the Collection of Charles Ryskamp." Works from the collection of the former director of the Morgan Library and the Frick Collection; through 5/9. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. 12-6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio

"Antonio Frasconi: Langston Hughes's *Let America Be America Again*, a Portfolio of Woodcuts, 1997–98." A recent suite of prints by the internationally recognized master of the woodcut medium; through 5/20. • "Contemporánea 2001: Neighbors—An Installation by Leandro Erlich." A site-specific installation that transforms a typical apartment-building corridor into a confounding space of peepholes, locked doors, and a strange elevator; through 5/20. • "Here & There/Aquí y Allá: Six Artists From San Juan." Works in various media by six contemporary artists living in Puerto Rico; through 5/20. • 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.-Sun. 11-5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art

"African Forms." Handcrafted objects from more than 156 ethnic groups and 34 African nations, among them clothing, jewelry, kitchen utensils, devotional objects, and musical instruments; through 8/8. • 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. noon-6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art

"ABCD: A Collection of Art Brut." *Art brut* works by Darger, Mackintosh, Ramirez, Wölfli, and others, from the collection of the Paris-based foundation ABCD (Art Brut Connaissance & Diffusion); through 7/28. • Two Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.-Sun. 11:30-7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage

"Citizens Betrayed: The Hungarian Forced Labor Battalions/1939–1945." Photographs, memorabilia, and artifacts on loan from the Sydney Jewish Museum; through 9/3. • 18 First Place, Battery Park City (212-968-1800), Sun.-Wed. 9-5, Thurs. 9-8, Fri. and the eve of Jewish holidays 9-3, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; $7, $5 students and seniors.

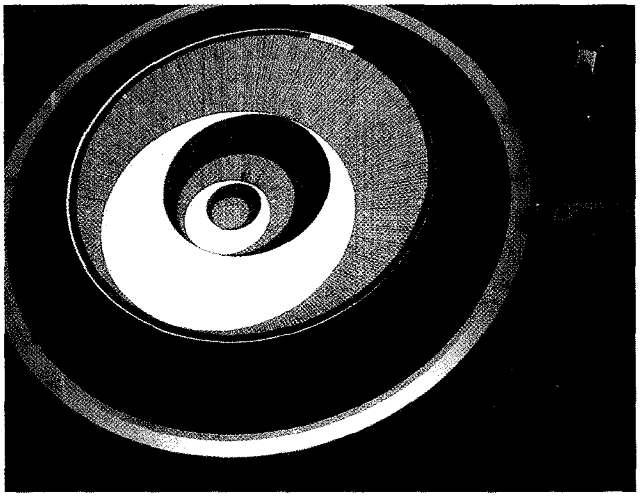
Museum of Modern Art

"Andreas Gursky." A retrospective of works by the German photographer covering 1984 to the present and exploring such subjects as tourism, architecture, sporting events, and techno-music raves; through 5/15. • "Workspheres." An exhibition examining the changing nature of the workplace and the role of design in creating solutions to accommodate such changes, including works from LOT/EK architecture, the MIT Media Laboratory, Digital Image Design, IDEO, Jongeriuslab, and others; through 4/22. • "Van Gogh's Postman: The Portraits of Joseph Roulin." Five of the six paintings that the artist made of his friend and protector during 1888 and 1889; through 5/15. • "Collaborations With *Parkett*: 1984 to Now." An exhibition celebrating the museum's recent acquisition of artworks commissioned by *Parkett*, the contemporary journal of art and ideas; through 6/5. • "About Face: Selections From the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books." Modern and contemporary prints after

On View

Thinking Outside the Box

When we think of Marcel Duchamp, we tend to dwell on the enigmas posed by such sculptures as his *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (a.k.a. *Large Glass*); by his readymades; or by his erotic assemblage viewed through two peepholes, *Etant Donnés: 1. La Chute d'Eau/2. Le Gaz d'Éclairage*. What's less considered—but was undoubtedly crucial to the physical manifestation of his riddles—was Duchamp's interest in the experience of viewing art and challenging the ways it had previously been shown. **Marcel Duchamp on Display: Optics, Exhibition Installations, Portable Museums** examines the artist's preoccupation with matters of display through such innovative efforts as his *Box in the Valise*, an elaborate collapsible miniature museum-in-a-box; his optical devices and imprinted discs (pictured, *Rotorelief*, 1935); his catalogue designs; and photographs of the startling installations he created for four major international Surrealist exhibitions. At Zabriskie Gallery, 41 East 57th Street; through May 5.



portraits, by Dottie Attie, Max Beckmann, Richard Hamilton, Sherrie Levine, Pablo Picasso, and others; through 6/5. • "What is a Print?" Examples of the four main printmaking processes—woodcut, etching, lithography, and screenprint—shown with the tools used in their creation; through 6/5. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Tues., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York

"Art at the Table: Lotos Club State Dinner Menus, 1898–1922." Twenty menus designed for special dinners held by the literary club honoring Samuel L. Clemens, Booth Tarkington, Admiral Robert E. Peary, and other luminaries of the day; through 7/29. • "Working Women: A Century of New York Junior League Volunteerism." Photographs, clothing, and ephemera documenting the movement founded by Mary Harriman in 1901; through 8/12. • "Guys & Dolls: The Fabled Musical of Broadway." Scene designs, costumes, photographs, and ephemera drawn from the archives of composer Frank Loesser and playwright Abe Burrows that reveal how they turned the Damon Runyon story "The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown" into the 1950 hit musical; through 6/10. • "The City Shops: Photographs by Martha Cooper and Fred W. McDarrah." Images from the sixties to the present documenting shops in New York City neighborhoods; through 4/15. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology

"Work in Uniform: Dressed for Detail." A survey of twentieth-century uniform design, including examples of outfits for waitresses, UPS workers, flight attendants, police, Playboy bunnies, and others; through 4/17. • "Dreaming in Print: A Decade of *Visionaire*." An exhibition covering the first ten years of the multi-format magazine of fashion and art; through 4/21. • "Belgian Fashion Design: Antwerp Style." A survey of modern Belgian fashion design as seen through more than 100 clothing ensembles dating from 1982 to the present; through 4/14. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. noon-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design

"Selections From the Collection." Recently acquired works by National Academicians Sam Gilliam, Red Grooms, Malcolm Morley, and Larry Rivers, as well as masterworks by William Merritt Chase, Asher B. Durand, John Singer Sargent, George Tooker, and others; through 5/6. • "The Cos Cob Art Colony: Impressionists on the Connecticut Shore." Works by the group of American artists who gathered in the Cos Cob section of Greenwich, Connecticut, between 1890 and 1920, among them Childe Hassam, Theodore Robinson, John Twachtman, and J. Alden Weir; through 5/13. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs. 12-5, Fri. 10-6, Sat. and Sun. 10-5; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art

"Paul McCarthy." The first U.S. survey of the Los Angeles-based artist's work, a fusion of sculpture and performance characterized by combinations of pop-culture clichés, social taboos, and art-historical references; through 5/13. • 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. noon-6, Thurs.-Sat. noon-8 (free Thurs. 6-8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library

"Touring West: Nineteenth-Century Performing Artists on the Overland Trails." Objects, manuscripts, photographs, and ephemera relating to the individual artists and troupes who brought entertainment to the pioneers and miners living in the newly mapped territories of the American West; through 7/7. • "Heading West: Mapping the Territory." Sheet maps, photographs, atlases, and books relating to the mapping of the American West from the collection of the library's Map Division; through 5/19. • "Drawings by Charles Addams." A rotating selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist; through 6/30. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089), Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free.

New-York Historical Society

"Out of Time: Designs for the Twentieth-Century Future." Visions of the future as seen through twentieth-century architectural renderings, models, and drawings; 4/14–6/10. • "Choosing to Participate." A multimedia traveling exhibition sponsored by the national educational organization Facing History and Ourselves; through 5/27. • "Walk About: Past and Present Views of New York." Photographs of New York in the nineties by Richard Benson, Mitch Epstein, Ed Grazda, Thomas Roma, and Michael Spano; through 6/17. • "Irwin Silver: Nightwalks." Photographs of New York City at night that were taken by Silver between 1979 and 1989; through 5/20. • "The Sight of Music: Prints From the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams." Twentieth-century prints offering visual interpretations of music, by Chuck Close, Red Grooms, Roy Lichtenstein, and others; through 6/17. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center

"Atelier van Lieshout: *Darkroom*." An outdoor installation by the Dutch artist Joep van Lieshout; through 5/29. • "Bernhard Martin: *Kings Corner*." An installation of a walk-in closet that opens to reveal a table dance scene designed for a one-person audience; through 5/29. • "Luigi Ontani: 1965–2001." The first U.S. retrospective of work by the Italian artist known for his elaborate installations and *tableaux vivants* (living paintings); through 5/6. • "Massimo Bartolini: *Untitled (Wave)*." An installation of a pool in P.S.1's outdoor sculpture gallery; through 5/20. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. 12-6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art

"Gio Ponti: A Metaphysical World." Furniture, sculpture, and drawings by the groundbreaking Italian designer and founder of *Domus* magazine, including his Superleggera chair of 1957 made for Cassina; through 5/20. • "Around, Around, and Away—Not-a-Superhero and the Myth of New York." A wall drawing by Luca Buvoli accompanied by recorded narration and sound installations by Jeffrey Lependorf; through 5/27. • "Heart of Glass." Works by seven artists who take a conceptual and poetic approach to glass, among them Josiah McElheny, Katy Schimert, Kiki Smith, and Not Vital; through 5/27. • New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Tues.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. and Sun. 12-5; $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art

"BitStreams." An exhibition exploring the range of artistic expression made possible by digital technology, including installations, video, animation, photography, and sound pieces; through 6/10. • "Data Dynamics." Five new works of Internet art; through 6/10. • "Kenneth Josephson: A Retrospective." The first full-scale assessment of the work of this photographer, from his Conceptualist works of the sixties and seventies to his more recent images of street life in India, nudes, and European landscapes; through 5/27. • "The Things Themselves: Pictures of Dust by Vik Muniz." The artist's photographs of his drawings of dust based on photographs of minimalist sculptures in the museum's permanent collection; through 5/20. • 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues.-Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri. 1-9 (pay what you wish every Fri. 6-9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Auctions

Christie's

4/11 at 10 and 2: "Magnificent Jewels." On view from 4/7. • 20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000).

Doyle

Next auction on 4/24. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Sotheby's

4/5 at 6:30 and 4/6 and 4/7 at 10:15 and 2: "The Collection of Gianni Versace." On view from 3/31. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries

4/5 at 10:30 and 2: "Photographic Literature and Photographs." On view from 3/31. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).

Photograph courtesy of the Zabriskie Gallery.

Edited by Robin Raisfeld
& Rob Patronite

New and Noteworthy

★ A Salt & Battery
The folks from Tea & Sympathy have expanded their British empire with a fish-and-chips shop that literally reeks of authenticity. Aside from the main attraction, properly wrapped in British newspaper, there are mushy peas, pickled onions, Heinz baked beans, and the improbably edible deep-fried Mars Bars. Between orders, a relentlessly cheery staff spouts cockney slang while fry-chef Patsy Carroll—who used to cook in the British Merchant Navy and then, judging by his hoop earrings and Errol Flynn beard, turned pirate—cracks wise. • 112 Greenwich Ave. (212-691-2713). (I-M)

Adä
As you might guess from the Murano-glass chandeliers and bas-relief nudes, this isn't your run-of-the-mill curry kitchen. Your dinner choices are limited to two streamlined prix fixe menus that run $55 and $65, and feature newfangled novelties like salmon quenelles with cashew rice and fresh coconut curry, garam masala quail with date-and-pistachio pillau, and wild-mushroom biryani with white-truffle oil. • 208 E. 58th St. (212-371-6060). (M-E)

★ Alain Ducasse at the Essex House
After a harrowing ride through the critics' spanking machine, six-Michelin-star chef Alain Ducasse has emerged if not triumphant then at least standing. All his Cartier pens have been dutifully stolen, the array of mysterious knives presented in a leather case is gone, but the extravagantly Art Deco cocoon of a room feels more like a $160–prix fixe Michelin supernova now that the kitchen has pulled up its socks. Dishes that were very good to begin with have gotten even better—pea soup with crab cakes; silken woodcock, pheasant, and foie gras terrine; halibut with sea-urchin custard; glorious cheese; luscious rhubarb clafouti—and even the few disappointments don't sting so badly now that the chastised Ducasse has shown us his warm and fuzzy side. • 155 W. 58th St. (212-265-7300). (E)

★ Aleutia
You may have to navigate past the murky leather swathed bar crowd and scurry up the industrial steps to escape their piercing mating calls, but forsooth, there is light at the top of the stairs. In fact, if Aleutia is willing to shift its priorities a bit, it has the potential of being considered among the city's most inventive and satisfying seafood restaurants. Vibrantly flavored dishes like citrus grilled octopus or pancetta wrapped cod provide life preserving—make that affirming distractions—from the hormonally raging sea around you. • 220 Park Ave. So. (212-529-3111). (E)

★ Annisa
Deft designer tricks like a raised dining space in soothing shades of off-white, and secluded nooks give this room a dignified grandeur, and the food backs it up. Chef Anita Lo finds inspiration everywhere from Shanghai (soup dumplings crowned with seared foie gras) to Provence (chickpea-stuffed zucchini blossoms with tomato and saffron sauces). The name means "women" in Arabic, so pay special attention to the gender-specific wine list. • 13 Barrow St. (212-741-6699). (M-E)

★ AZ
If you think pan-Asian fusion is so last decade, make haste to the Flatiron triplex that used to be Flowers, remade with a glass elevator and retractable roof and now home to chef Patricia Yeo and her inspired culinary inventions. What works? A trio of sensational chutneys on Indian flatbread, and lapsang souchon-smoked quail with scallion pancakes, for starters. A street-level lounge caters to lighter appetites. • 21 W. 17th St. (212-691-8888). (E)

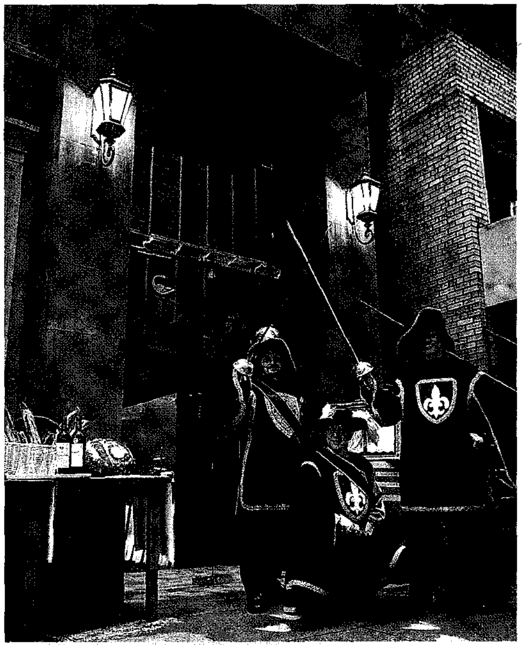
★ Baldoria
Frank Pellegrino Jr.'s father earned the nickname Frankie No after years of politely declining requests for reservations at Rao's, his ten-table East Harlem celebrity hangout. Junior offers better odds in the theater district: 136 seats, plus a raw bar upstairs. A fugitive from Felidia's posh kitchen adds some verve to the home-style Neapolitan seafood salad and roasted peppers Pellegrino borrowed from his dad uptown. • 249 W. 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

Banjara
In spite of its location amid all those cookie-cutter curry cookers, Banjara is an oasis on Little India's restaurant row. The room and adjoining lounge are cliché-free. And chef Tuhin Dutta's unusual dishes like juicy clay-oven chicken marinated in wine and cream, and dumpakht (think supercolossal Indian potpie) should dispel any worries that the street's mythical underground shared kitchen has taken on a new client. • 97 First Ave. (212-477-5956). (M)

BarTabac
Following in the footsteps of pioneering restaurateurs before him, Georges Forgeois, the empire-building force behind Bistro Jules, Café Noir, and Le Singe Vert, has entered the Smith Street fray with a Brooklyn bar and bistro of his own. Francophiles will appreciate the artfully aged environs, the all-French wine list, the menu of French bar snacks, and the obligatory steak-frites and onion soup. Not to mention what we assume will be a very tobacco-tolerant attitude. • 128 Smith St., at Dean St., Brooklyn (718-923-0918). (I-M) AE only

★ Beppe
Cesare Casella's devoted fans know him for his Tuscan cooking and his signature breast-pocket herb bouquet, both of which have resurfaced at this Gramercy trattoria. You'll also find an instant coziness, a pride of rustic Tuscan products stashed behind glass at the entrance, the warmth of a giant open fireplace. Casella's cozze are plump and sweet in a fiery broth; chewy handmade pinci noodles in walnut-tomato sauce are a triumph. We love braised black cabbage in toasted Tuscan bread, the grilled wild mushrooms with polenta crostini, and savory braised spare ribs. And desserts like sensational lemon "pudding" with candied orange peel are luscious variations on a Tuscan theme. • 45 E. 22nd St. (212-982-8422). (E)

Bot
The all-plastic décor at this NoLIta spinoff of Chelsea's Bottino refutes every Tuscan-trattoria cliché in the book, but the simply prepared, flavorful food and the mostly Italian wine list are reassuring proof that a traditional heart beats inside its ultramodern body. The iMac-hued garden room is linked to the front lounge by a serpentine expanse of chartreuse wall and an open kitchen and bar, which dispense fresh salads, satisfying pastas, and fruity Prosecco cock-



Photograph by Carina Salvi.

Ask Gael

I'm bored with nutritional discipline. Where's the fat?

Shatter the chains of correctness with foie gras and sausage at **D'Artagnan, The Rotisserie**, Ariane Daguin's homey and loving re-creation of Southwest France in midtown. When her father, the swashbuckling ambassador of Gascony cuisine, sold the family's hotel in Auch, Ariane, passionate purveyor of foie gras and game to America's fussy restaurateurs, confiscated the red velour chairs, her grandmother's armoire, and a collection of Musketeering memorabilia. The tall and gangly space might seem awkward if it weren't so irresistibly French. The accents. The Basque linens. The potent Armagnac-spiked aperitifs, a must. The birds sizzling on the spit, their fat perfuming the potatoes below. Sip a fresh red Buzet and defy mortality with the assiette of three foie gras or a toss of smoked duck breast, duck prosciutto, duck-leg confit, and foie gras shavings on mixed greens called "The Duck Stops Here." Don't even consider the salmon—feeble bow to sanity. Have the luscious garbure (soup to eat with a fork) or duck-breast steak (rare, please) or fabulous spit-roasted leg of lamb. Indulge in a trou Gascon, the shot of white Armagnac that supposedly helps Gascon gourmands live longer than their Gallic confrères. If you're still breathing, pour a little more caramel butter on your rice pudding. Those overstuffed duck livers aren't cheap, but entrées run a reasonable $19 to $26, with a $15.95 foie gras burger on brioche at lunch. And they deliver. (152 East 46th Street; 212-687-0300.)

tails in equal measure. • 231 Mott St. (646-613-1312). (M)

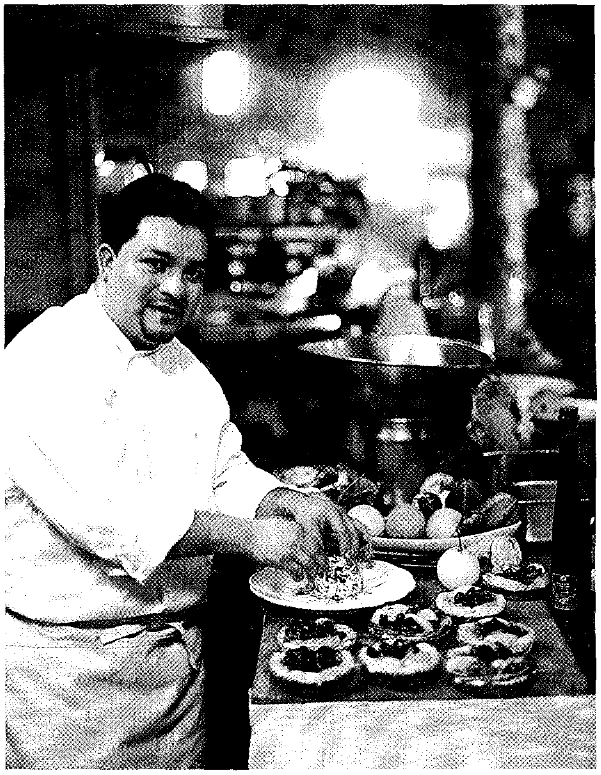
★ Brasserie 8 1/2
At this souped-up designer bookend to the newly modish Brasserie, you get big brasserie dishes plus a pumpkin-carpeted-diva staircase entrance, and two subterranean, airport-lounge-style bars. The simpler menu choices tend to be better, like the frisée salad and the cornflake-crusted crab cakes. The evening scene is overcooked, but lunch at bar No. 2 (the blue-green one) is better. • 9 W. 57th St. (212-829-0812). (M–E)

★ Caffé La Grolla
The itty-bitty offshoot of Ristorante La Grolla performs three essential functions: It accommodates 28 extra bodies; it provides a more casual, late-night alternative to its popular parent; and it delivers. The menu's an appealing mix of La Grolla classics its regulars can't live without (veal scallopine, scrumptious artichokes) and brand-new dishes like supernally moist roasted pork loin and Neapolitan-style pizzas. • 411A Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-579-9200). (I–M)

The Underground Gourmet

Mother's Little Helper

When Viko Ortega was 12, he helped his mother open a bakery in their tiny Mexican village. Seven flour-dusted years later, he came to New York, anxious to do anything but roll dough. And for a while, he experimented with alternative careers, working first in a clothing factory and then in a printing plant—all to no avail. "It was so boring," says Ortega (pictured), explaining his eventual return to the kitchen, working his way up from dishwasher to chef and landing in Woodside, at the newish **La Flor Bakery and Cafe.** Emphasis, ironically, on *bakery:* The cozy corner restaurant has two mouthwatering pastry displays, one stocked with a huge assortment of Mexican rolls and buns, the other brimming with sour-cream coffee cake, oversize oatmeal-raisin cookies, cranberry scones, and banana muffins—the sort of sweet stuff you might find at Columbus Bakery on the Upper West Side, where the ambitious Ortega works the day shift. But his heart, it seems, is in Queens, where he cooks food from his Puebla past (huevos rancheros) and his New York present (pan-roasted salmon in a spinach-caper sauce). That bicultural approach might sound unfocused, but it's had unexpectedly delicious, and affordable, results—not even the steak au poivre costs more than $10.95. Ortega puts his own spin on otherwise standard dishes and transforms them into something new: a phyllo-wrapped shrimp b'steeya sits in a pool of mole poblano; a crusty stone-baked pizza melds mozzarella with two Mexican cheeses, and swaps marinated bits of pork and a smattering of cilantro for sausage and oregano. Mexican standards like tortas, tacos, and quesadillas—made here with thick, toothsome tortillas—are fresh and flavorful and served with vibrant salsas and a garnish of well-dressed greens, a *taquería* anomaly. If you'd prefer, Ortega will happily grill you a burger or toss a Caesar salad, and if you're not in the mood for his lovely flan, there's always the mixed-berry clafouti. Evidently, he's made peace with his pastry past. (53-02 Roosevelt Avenue, Queens; 718-426-8023.) R.R.



★ Caffè Linda
Caffè Linda is a refuge for homesick Italian expats as well as midtown desk jockeys hungering for good food and a warm welcome. Owner Claudio Marini graciously provides both: Every meal begins with complimentary bruschetta and ends with a stick of Wrigley's with the check. In between, there's simple, satisfying salads; sandwiches; a dozen or so impeccably al dente pastas; and dinner specials like stewed rabbit with mashed potatoes and sautéed calamaretti with avocado. • 145 E. 49th St. (646-497-1818). (I–M)

Centolire
Pino Luongo seems to open a restaurant a year, and when you're that prolific, it helps to have a gimmick. At his slightly rusticated remake of the old Celadon space, the theme is Italian-American, a cooking style that's enjoying a bit of a kitschy comeback. Everything on the menu is labeled either Old World (like timpano, à la *Big Night*) or New World (the more genteel mezze maniche with cauliflower confit). And anything with a little pot-shaped symbol next to it is slowly baked in terra-cotta, a technique that seems to have bridged both chronological and continental divides. • 1167 Madison Ave., near 86th St. (212-734-7711). (M–E)

Chinghalle
The name of Mark Straussman's (Campagna) frenetic new contribution to the meatpacking district means "wild boar" in Italian, although the spelling's been altered, presumably to attract a wider clientele. The menu mingles artful down-home Mulberry Street cooking with an odd variety of New Country favorites like St. Louis ribs and a gelato banana split. Stick to the mostly delicious Italian food (try the three-cheese pizza, and spaghetti alla Nonna). And try to secure one of the vintage Belgian train-car booths, to keep from getting trampled by all the rowdy bankers. • 50 Gansevoort St. (212-242-3200). (M)

★ Chow Bar
Chef-partner Peter Klein started out cooking at China Grill and El Teddy's, then parlayed that spicy Chino-Latino experience into a lucrative cross-country consulting gig. Luckily for us, he's settled down in the West Village, where's he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively bar crowd, which seems ecstatic to finally find a quasi-exotic neighborhood place to call its own. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)

Craft
Tom Colicchio is a chef with a mission, two jobs, and what must be a crackerjack support team. When he's not supervising the three-star kitchen at Gramercy Tavern, he's reducing cooking (or elevating it, depending on your point of view) to its most basic elements, a tactic that works only when the ingredients are of the highest possible quality, procured from small family farms and artisanal producers. At his first solo venture, literally around the corner from Gramercy and decorated in a similarly elegant modern style, he and his chef de cuisine, Marco Canora, like any good craftsmen, collaborate on a high-concept menu that focuses almost obsessively on the raw materials. • 43 E. 19th St. (212-780-0880). (M–E)

D'Artagnan, The Rotisserie
After fifteen years of selling foie gras and game to restaurants, D'Artagnan has opened its own: a narrow, high-ceilinged duplex countrified with tiled floors, rough ocher walls, a communal table, and Basque linens. Besides the signature terrines and charcuterie, there's seriously rib-sticking Gascon fare like cassoulet, spit-roasted free-range chicken, and "la garbure et son chabrot," a duck-confit soup dense enough to be eaten with a fork—or drunk in the true Gascon style, directly from the bowl. • 152 E. 46th St. (212-687-0300). (M–E)

★ Dim Sum gogo
What do you get when a French-American food writer (Colette Rossant) collaborates with a Hong Kong chef (Guy Lieu)? Dumpling dough flavored

Photographs by Kenneth Chen.

with beet juice, seasoned beef patties on steamed buns with taro fries, roast chicken smothered with fried garlic stems, and 24 kinds of dumplings. Plus four variations on the dough-wrapper theme, four different sauces, and microwave-safe takeout containers. • 5 E. Broadway (212-732-0797). (I-M)

★ The Dining Room

You know how you love cooking those intimate dinners at home for just you and your close friends? Oh, you don't. Well, then don't you wish you were at one? This scrumptious example of turning lemons into lemon soufflé not only transforms an awkward layout into a series of cozy hideaways but it gets you all warm and snuggly with hearty American cuisine that surprisingly weighs less than the conversations around it. • 154 E. 79th St. (212-327-2500). (M-E)

District

At this new hotel restaurant, David Rockwell's design makes playful reference to the theater-district locale, and Sam DeMarco's menus make mouthwatering reference to the fun, original food he popularized downtown at First. For breakfast, there's the Scramble (smoked salmon, cream-cheese fondue, latkes, and dill-caper gremolata). For lunch, "double features" like potato pierogi with a brisket sandwich. Plus a $28 pre-theater dinner and a late-night "mini-bar." • 130 W. 46th St. (212-485-2999). (M)

★ Figs

Until they install one of those restaurants with waiter-masseuses and beds instead of tables, the next best thing in tri-state airport noshing is this 125-seat branch of Todd English's Figs. During flight-delay downtime, curb your air rage with a lively Boston-bibb-and-watercress salad sprinkled with Maytag blue; spaghettini with roasted tomato and toasted breadcrumbs; or a killer to-go flatbread pizza topped with figs, prosciutto, and Gorgonzola in a box designed to fit your seat-back tray. • Central Terminal Bldg., La Guardia Airport, Queens (718-446-7600). (I-M)

★ Fleur de Sel

Chef Cyril Renaud wanted his first restaurant to be a personal statement. So he hung his own watercolors, painted the menu covers, and named the place after the highly prized, hand-harvested sea salt that's native to Brittany, just like him. His $52 prix fixe menu is small and changes daily, so there's no telling when you might see that lobster-avocado salad or venison fillet with juniper berries and orange zest again. • 5 E. 20th St. (212-460-9100). (M-E)

★ 44 & X Hell's Kitchen

John Tesar's inspired new American cooking packs this handsome room nightly with Hell's Kitchen locals and clued-in theatergoers, happy to find such good food and friendly service this far west. After feeding Wall Street warriors downtown at Vine, Tesar's traded in some of his fancier flourishes for a renewed focus on down-home dishes like rich and gooey mac-and-cheese, crispy buttermilk fried chicken and chive waffles, and individual meat loaf swathed in tomato sauce. • 622 Tenth Ave., at 44th St. (212-977-1170). (M-E)

★ Gnocco Caffe

Co-owner Pierluigi Palazzo named this East Village café after the traditional Modenese snack of crispy, puffy fried dough, usually served with prosciutto di Parma. But just to complicate matters, the gently-priced menu also offers two versions of gnocchetti (an entirely different, equally delicious thing), plus well-dressed, unusually fresh salads and an unassuming pork tenderloin lavished with Parmigiano-Reggiano shavings and an aged-balsamic emulsion. • 337 E. 10th St. (212-677-1913). (I)

★ Grand Sichuan Int'l Midtown

Each successive branch of this Szechuan chainlet has become progressively glitzier, culminating in this location's chandeliers and wall-to-wall carpeting. What separates this one from the kung pao pack is menu oddities like the eight dishes inspired by a Chinese TV show and a super-spicy category called "Mao's home cooking." (The chairman liked his chili peppers—who knew?) • 745 Ninth Ave., nr. 50th St. (212-582-2288). (I)

★ Hampton Chutney Co.

SoHo can be a soulless place, not to mention maddeningly expensive, and in desperate need of good karma and cheap, delicious grub. This eighteen-seat offshoot of a popular Amagansett enterprise satisfies both criteria with its Indian-chant soundtrack, gurgling fountain, and addictive dosas and uttapa made from rice-and-lentil flour and stuffed or topped with everything from traditional spiced-potato-masala to untraditional tuna and avocado ($6.50 to $10.50). Plus daily soups, chai teas, cardamom coffee, and fudgy brownies. • 68 Prince St. (212-226-9996). (I) ($)

Hudson Cafeteria

The room is big, dark, incredibly handsome, cavernous, more humming than boisterous, unfocused but friendly. Think of Hudson Cafeteria as a community center for the privileged. And while the food tries to be more ambitious than that of its downtown counterpart, Canteen, the stuff that makes the surprisingly diverse customers happiest is beef stew, macaroni and cheese (without the foie gras), and a banana split. It's become very canny to claim discomfort with comfort food, but those eating it here want more and couldn't care less. • 356 W. 58th St. (212-554-6500). (M-E)

★ Inside

Charleen Badman used to cook at the Lobster Club, but she always wanted her own place. Now, with the help of Anne Rosenzweig, her former boss and current partner, she's got one. Badman's style of cooking is influenced by her working vacations in places like Italy, where she learned to make ravioli, and Chez Panisse, where she immersed herself in the sort of hyper-seasonal cooking she's brought to this casually elegant dining room, with nothing breaking the $20 barrier. There's a small, appealing wine list, weekend brunch, and for inveterate nibblers unwilling to commit to a full meal, a bar menu offering mussels and Welsh rabbit (providing the gratis papadums and fried plantains won't hold you over). • 9 Jones St. (212-229-9999). (M)

★ Javier

There may be no better chicken sandwich than the pressed pollo asado at this friendly café and takeout shop, a no-frills storefront where chef-owner Javier Martinez supplements his grandmother's Puerto Rican recipes with a limited menu of Latin-Caribbean classics. The chicken is moist and succulent, the ajilimojilo sauce redolent of garlic and lime, the pan de manteca crusty and compact. But save room for main dishes like tender roast pork (pernil) accompanied by deeply flavored beans and rice and daily specials like smoky white-bean soup and chorizo-flecked tortilla espanola. The coffee is strong and smooth, ideally drunk with a sweet, flaky quesito or a slice of coco-piña cake. Eat in, take out, or call for delivery. • 70 Greenwich Ave. (212-929-7878). (I)

Jimmy's Uptown

Jimmy Martinez's new joint brings a little bit of SoHo to Harlem. The former residential space on Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard has been decorated with half-moon leather banquettes and luminous Lycra lamps. There is foie gras on the menu (served atop sweet calabaza squash); filet mignon with horseradish-flavored grits; and plump, pecan-crusted catfish fillets. Some of Jimmy's culinary experiments are more successful than others, but the hopping uptown scene is worth the trip. • 2207 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. (212-491-4000). (E)

La Palapa

The chef at this friendly East Village oasis grew up in Mexico, under the pervasive culinary spell of cookbook author and avid gardener Diana Kennedy, a family friend. That might account for the menu's reliance on fresh herbs, and its creativity. Rices are flavored with tomato, saffron, and tomatillo; moles concocted from sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, and guajillo chiles. The skirt steak soaks up its tequila marinade, cactus comes in a casserole, and chiles rellenos float uncharacteristically in tomato broth. • 77 St. Marks Pl. (212-777-2537). (I-M)

Le Souk

On a rapidly gentrifying Alphabet City block, two Egyptian brothers have carved out their own North African niche and accessorized it with Moroccan tile, glowing lanterns, and camel-skin chairs. A Tunisian chef oversees an evolving menu of assorted tajines and couscous, and meze like calves' liver and Merguez sausage. But food is only half the story. Linger long enough to smoke a hookah and admire the belly dancer. • 47 Ave. B (212-777-5454). (I-M) ($)

☆ Le Zinc

Once you open a place like Chanterelle, where do you go from there? If you're Karen and David Waltuck, you head two blocks south and two blocks east to open a casual bistro—the perfect spot to unwind after a long night shaving truffles. The menu, a French framework embellished with Asian, Jewish, and Hungarian highlights, reads like the homespun work of someone who's sown his wild *hautes*: charcuterie, steak-frites, crispy duck wings, Grandma Gaby's stuffed cabbage. A burger, even. And nothing over $19. • 139 Duane St. (212-513-0001). (I-M)

★ Locanda Vini & Olii

A beautifully restored 130-year-old Clinton Hill pharmacy complete with apothecary drawers and rolling ladders right out of Henry Higgins's library is the charming backdrop for this terrific Tuscan restaurant. Two young chefs recruited from Italy turn out uncommon antipasti and salads; main dishes like rabbit civet; and a wealth of exquisitely sauced pastas like carrot maltagliati with fava beans. The excellent house wines are sold "consumption"-style. The bottle is left on the table, you help yourself, and whatever's left is theatrically measured with a homemade stick. It's the most fun you can have in a drugstore without a prescription. • 129 Gates Ave., Brooklyn (718-622-9202). (M)

★ Los Dos Molinos

Not since Drew flashed Dave has Manhattan witnessed a hotter display than the one at Los Dos Molinos—the Union Square branch of the popular Arizona restaurant. The slow, satisfying burn begins with chips and fiery salsa and continues with familiar but superlative Mexican-American fare. Entrées like irresistibly hot "adovada" pork ribs come with rice and beans, a good homemade flour tortilla, and an apology in advance printed on the menu: "Sorry we do not provide a mild sauce, I do not know how to make 'mild,' " reads the chef's mission statement–indemnity clause. • 119 E. 18th St. (212-505-1574). (I-M)

★ Lotus

Everything you wanted from a trendy club-bar-restaurant and less. Less attitude, less discomfort, less elbow contact, and less forgettable food. Lotus is a blooming surprise. A slight kitchiness keeps it warm. Nice guy owners keep it friendly. And chef Richard Farnabe keeps you well fed. Think of the velvet rope outside as a ribbon. And Lotus as a gift. • 409 W. 14th St. (212-243-4420). (M-E)

★ Mangiarini

There may be more Italian restaurants on the Upper East Side than there are cannoli on Mulberry Street, but few as bare-boned chic as this one. The designer of the Calvin Klein boutique went commensurately minimalist at this narrow 30-seater, where spaghetti with lemon and basil and sandwiches like prosciutto and melted goat cheese on semolina flatbread are as stylishly stripped down as the décor. • 1593 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-734-5500). (I)

the cornmeal crust, spicy tomato sauce, and crayfish toppings, but who cares? This festive little joint's pies

Marika

Gourmet-starved Upper West Siders may be dazzled by the swanky cruise-ship interior, but the food here is generally unspectacular. Chef Joel Somerstein's best entrées tend to be the simpler ones, like a plump free-range chicken cooked in a Cabernet sauce, or a salty piece of skate. Most other items are overworked. There are plenty of fancy cocktails, though, a decent raw bar, and a fairly good roster of desserts, including a pistachio soufflé, which isn't an easy thing to find north of Columbus Circle. • 208 W. 70th St. (212-875-8600). (M-E)

MarkJoseph Steakhouse

"Your steak will be out any minute," says our waiter. "I just saw the chef chasing the cow." If that line plus the house specialty—porterhouse for two, three, or four, served family-style and ritually baptized with pooled juices—sounds familiar to habitués of that steak shrine across the river, it's no coincidence. The general manager and a cadre of remarkably friendly, seemingly rehabilitated waiters came straight from Peter Luger, and brought their meal-ending schlag with them. • 261 Water St., nr. Peck Slip (212-277-0020). (M-E)

★ Mary's Fish Camp
Here's a tip for anyone who's ever paced up and down Cornelia Street waiting for a vacant stool at Pearl Oyster Bar: The West Village is now home to *two* sources of world-class lobster rolls, silken clam chowder, and fragrantly moist, herb-stuffed whole fish. One of Pearl's chef-partners left to open this sunny corner spot equipped with a tin ceiling, a curved stainless-steel counter (ten tables, too), and new additions to the Pearl repertoire, like crispy kernel-studded corn fritters and a lush, sherry-enhanced lobster potpie. • 246 W. 4th St. (646-486-2185). (M)

★ Merge
Chef Sam DeMarco and his partners have a knack for creating neighborhood restaurants good enough to leave your neighborhood for. At Merge, in the former Indigo space, they've done it again. A cool, comfortable room, a friendly staff, a festive mood, signature "tiny tini" cocktails, and DeMarco's inspired multiculti neo-American cooking are an irresistable draw for locals as well as interlopers. Sunday evenings, "Gino's *Soprano* Style Dinner," a $25 prix fixe Italian-American feast, is an absolute steal. • 142 W. 10th St. (212-691-7757). (M) AE only

Mirchi
An up-to-date Indian restaurant that takes the street out of street food. The main attraction here is an open kitchen equipped with two *tawas*. The large saucer-shaped griddles that look like cast-iron gongs are used to prepare traditional Indian street food like tak-a-tak, a heavily spiced stir-fry of chopped vegetables and herbs, accessorized with chicken, lamb, or chicken liver, and served like tapas with little KFC-style dinner rolls. • 29 Seventh Ave. So. (212-414-0931). (I-M)

Nick & Stef's Steakhouse
Los Angeles chef Joachim Splichal opened the first branch of this steakhouse in his hometown, knowing it might play even better in red-meat-loving Manhattan. There's twelve of everything, from salads and starters to potatoes and sauces. And where's the beef? Front and center, hung out to dry in a steel-and-glass aging chamber. • 9 Penn Plaza (212-563-4444). (M-E)

NL
NL claims to be the first Dutch restaurant to open in Manhattan since Peter Stuyvesant's time. This may or may not be true, but given the tepid reputation Dutch food has developed over the past 350 years, NL is a minor revelation. The tiny storefront space looks like it's been lifted directly from some clean, modernist precinct of Amsterdam itself. The food's equally well packaged, especially an exotic version of hare stew, and the herring tartare. • 169 Sullivan St. (212-387-8801). (M)

★ Orsay
The new version of *The Exorcist* isn't nearly as chilling as what Jean de Noyer must have gone through ridding the demons from this place. But from the ash of Mortimer's musty chicken hash, Orsay has risen, a brasserie swirling with seductive arches and good cheer, giving the Upper East Side the kind of French tickle it sorely needs. The former regulars never had it so good. Do you think they'd know the diff? • 1057 Lexington Ave., at 75th St. (212-517-6400). (M)

Palma
It might not have a seat on the exchange, but the husband-and-wife catering company that runs this rustic Mediterranean restaurant has gone public. After years of catering fashion-industry shindigs, they've opened their salvaged barn doors to the rest of us. The rustic 35-seat dining room is furnished with a chestnut-beamed ceiling and Jerusalem-limestone bar, and a Sicilian chef (by way of Los Angeles) serves up a seafood-heavy Italian-Provençal menu featuring fried whitebait, brandade, and the house specialty, frutta di mare al cartoccio. • 28 Cornelia St. (212-691-2223). (M) ($)

Panino'teca 275
Sometimes Smith Street's great unfed masses crave something they can't find at any one of their cherished bistros. Something light. Something simple. Something delish. To sate those appetites, Kenneth Munz—in between action-packed shifts as Mercer Kitchen's sous-chef—helps his wife, Dianna, press bresaola-and-pecorino panini and assemble truffle-cauliflower bruschetta at their comfortable, attractive panini and wine bar, perfect for lazy lingerers. • 275 Smith St., nr. Sackett St., Brooklyn (718-237-2728). (I-M) ($)

★ Picasso Cafe
Chef-owner Michele Colonna's pizza has cultivated a loyal following including connoisseurs like Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery and a trusted arbiter of all oven-baked things—and it's no wonder: His pies are superbly charred, ultra-thin-crusted gems arrayed with homemade mozzarella, a mildly sweet tomato sauce, and the perfect ratio of toppings to crust. There's also a growing fan base for his bruschetta heaped with arugula and ripe tomato, hefty sandwiches on freshly baked focaccia, pasta, and entrées like grilled lamb chops with sage and balsamic vinegar. • 43 E. 29th St. (212-696-4488). (I-M)

★ Pipa
Doug Rodriguez has done Nuevo Latino at Patria and Chicama. Now he's tackling old-world Spanish (sort of). A field trip to Galicia yielded dozens of recipes for tapas, casseroles, soups, and flatbreads, all of which undergo subtle and delicious transformation in the chef's inventive hands. To wit: bocarones in escabeche with almond-crusted queso de cabra, crispy anchovies wrapped in sage leaves, and churros with warm chocolate dipping sauce for dessert. Much more radical is the conversion of the old Parlour Cafe into a seductive Iberian oasis with serrano ham hanging from beams and walls studded with enough shells to stock Sanibel Island. • 38 E. 19th St. (212-677-2233). (M)

★ Quartino
All that separates this rustic Italian osteria and wine bar from the South Street Seaport is a few short blocks and one major mind-set. It's all about the good life, Italian-style, which of course involves wine, served by the mini-carafe; delectable cured meats and imported cheeses; pasta; pizza; strong espresso; and convivial conversation. But amazingly, no smoking. The owners may be Italian, but they're also (with one or two exceptions) doctors. • 21 Peck Slip (212-349-4433). (I-M)

★ Rose Water
Chef-partner Neil O'Malley used to work at Oznot's Dish in Williamsburg, and it shows in his meze platter and lamb brik. But his tenure at Savoy, where he met partner John Tucker, is equally conspicuous. The menu's seasonal fixation guarantees a harvest of white-lightning corn and heirloom tomatoes in the summer. But the careful service, Brooklyn-mellow ambience, and sublime breaded pork chops are good year-round. • 787 Union St., Brooklyn (718-783-3800). (M)

Rothmann's Steakhouse & Grill
Chef Robert Dickert, an alumnus of Bobby Van's and Roslyn's Bryant & Cooper, might have a genetically predisposed way with dry-aged beefsteak—his grandmother was Peter Luger's niece. He carries on the family tradition with a $132 porterhouse for four. And he breaks it too with "Asian fried calamari" and something called West Coast chicken. • 3 E. 54th St. (212-319-5500). (E)

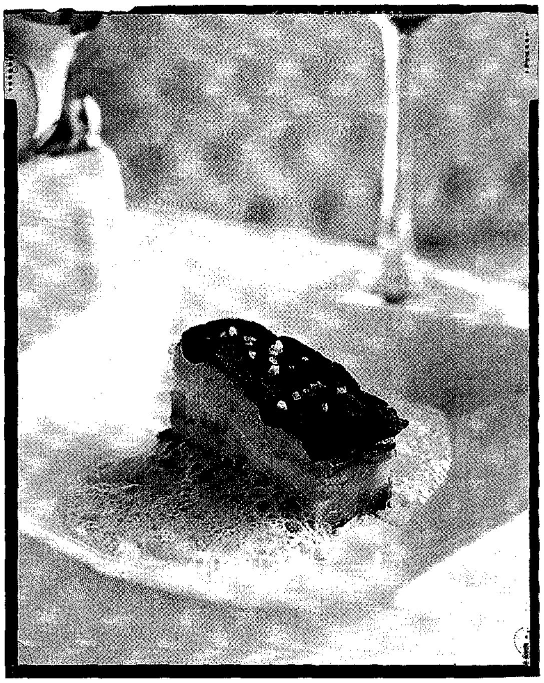
Sabor
As the abiding popularity of tapas proves, grazing never goes out of style. Customize a tiered tray of pan-Latino nibbles like shrimp empanaditas, octopus salad, smoked-chicken croquettes, and tuna seviche and watch the Upper West Side roll by, in all its dog-walking, stroller-pushing glory. • 462 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-579-2929). (I-M)

★ Sandro's
Though neither as ingenious as Babbo nor as familiar as Baldoria, Sandro's cooks the kind of forthright, robust Italian food you wish you knew how to make in your own home. In a room as basic as his flavors are direct, bucatini amatriciana resonates, snapper satiates, lemon pasta invigorates, and the fried artichokes tickle at least two senses. • 200 Ninth Ave., nr. 22nd St. (212-633-8033). (M)

Shangrila
Home to four momo-slinging kitchens at last count, the East Village may well be New York's Little—make that tiny—Tibet. This particular source of savory dumplings, flavorful noodle soups, dense steamed buns, and a handful of Japanese recipes the chef picked up during a stint at Honmura An is owned by the extended family behind Himalayan Vision, a clothing-and-gifts shop two doors down. The stylish design (bamboo dropped ceiling, concrete-and-wood floor) and appealing menu reveal that a good eye and a discerning palate run in the family. So, we presume, does the secret behind that killer hot sauce. • 129 Second Ave. (212-387-7908). (I-M)

★ Shelly's New York
The latest restaurant Shelly Fireman has created in his own image inhabits the space that was originally an Art Deco–era Horn & Hardart Automat. Only the assimilative Fireman would offer towering shellfish platters alongside newfangled chicken chow mein, barbecued ribs, and a burger audaciously crowned with seared foie gras and make it work. • 104 W. 57th St. (212-245-2422). (M-E)

★ Strip House
The Glazier Group and chef David Walzog, the same team responsible for Tapika, Michael Jordan's, and our



Object of Desire

B.F.T., No Mayo

Nothing could be more basic than the tastes of bacon and sliced truffles. Christian Delouvrier's roasted farm-raised bacon steeped in cream with essence of black truffles probably has more over-the-top intensity and simplicity than anything else on his $165 tasting menu. It's not cheap, of course; for that you'll have to find a French hog farm near a truffle forest. Until then, visit Lespinasse, where it's $27 as an à la carte appetizer. (2 East 55th Street; 212-339-6719.)

PETER KAMINSKY

Photograph by Dasha Wright Ewing.

slightly lower life expectancy, take a Gallic approach to the New York steakhouse menu with starters like a five-ounce foie gras torchon and sides like goose-fat potatoes and truffled cream spinach. (Try ordering that at Gallagher's.) Meanwhile, designer David Rockwell has given the former Asti's space a saucy new look to go with its naughty new name. • 13 E. 12th St. (212-328-0000). (M–E)

Tao Asian Bistro
The team behind Rue 57 has transformed the old Palace movie house into a pan-Asian place where the terminally indecisive can share spicy lobster roll with black caviar, Shanghai-style soup dumplings, $10-an-ounce Kobe beef with wasabi, and Peking duck. Book the "sky box," a private dining room where the projectionist's booth used to be, and gaze down on the sixteen-foot Buddha, keeping the peace, no doubt. • 42 E. 58th St. (212-888-2288). (M)

★ Todd English's Olives NY
Chef Todd English has a genius for artful, HungryMan dishes. He stuffs his pastas with delectable fillings (sweet chestnuts, shredded veal) and slathers them with creamy cheeses. He moulds cupolas of foie gras flan, builds pagodas of hanger steak, constructs pill boxes of tuna tartare with crunchy shrimps buried at the base. It's delicious, but a little overwhelming, especially if you tag on thrombotic desserts like the peppermint bombe (creamy chocolate with mint syrup inside). The cramped, frenetic space (in the lobby of the Union Square W Hotel) makes lunchtimes a more restful experience. • 201 Park Ave. So. (212-353-8345). (E)

Takeout

Runny Fried Eggs

The Easter Bunny would find these excessive, and you wouldn't want to stuff the little ones' Easter baskets with them, but among fish-and-chip-shop aficionados, spring hasn't officially sprung until the first battered and deep-fried Cadbury Creme Egg is out of the fryer. The gooey chocolate orbs with orange-and-white-colored fondant centers are $1.25 at **A Salt & Battery**, and contain fewer calories, incidentally, than a deep-fried Mars bar and less fat than, oh, let's say, a tub of butter. (112 Greenwich Avenue; 212-691-2713.)

Town
Geoffrey Zakarian isn't new to chic hotel restaurants. He made his name cooking at "44," after all. But now, as chef-owner of the sleekly luxurious restaurant inside the new Chambers hotel, he's making every effort to break away from the boutique bunch with dishes like cod "pot roast"; veal tongue Basque-style; halibut with pork belly and black trumpets; even an updated pastrami sandwich. A boon for the frequent flyer: he plans to change his menu monthly. • 15 W. 56th St. (212-582-4445). (M–E)

★ Triomphe
Now that 44th Street west of Fifth is hotel row, the venerable Iroquois has emerged from its midlife stodge with a $13 million makeover and a pocket-size restaurant. Perhaps the prices could be sweeter, but there is refreshing pride in the serving crew, and much to savor on Steven Zobel's menu: tender braised rabbit, oysters simmered in Vermouth cream, sautéed chicken livers, and a commendably serious steak. • 49 W. 44th St. (212-453-4233). (M–E)

Tuscan Steak
Jeffery Chodorow's latest mega concept restaurant is as big as a casino and nearly as profitable. Dinner is served "family style," which means dishes begin hitting the table soon after you sit down, and never stop. There's a clunky, assembly-line antipasto, several undistinguished pastas, and enough gooey risottos to caulk a ship. The signature Florentine T-bone (it comes in a 50 oz. "più grande" size) is compulsively edible, although the quality of the meat varies drastically from night to night. This isn't true of the desserts, which are uniformly treacly and overbuilt. • 622 Third Ave., at 40th St. (212-404-1700). (E)

Virot
Before opening the restaurant at the new Dylan hotel, replete with twenty-foot coffered ceilings and grand fireplace, Didier Virot toiled away under Jean-Georges Vongerichten at JoJo and Jean Georges. Now he's serving $49 prix fixe meals of his own design ($75 for the tasting), featuring the luxurious likes of scallops baked in the shell with sea urchin, and broiled crispy squab with oatmeal porcini cake. Book a room, and see what he has in mind for breakfast. • 52 E. 41st St. (646-658-0266). (E)

★ Wallsé
Who knew veal goulash could be elegant? Kurt Gutenbrunner's version is an artful mound of tender meat you almost regret toppling. And though dishes like tafelspitz and wiener schnitzel seem like a culinary memoir, the guiding principle here is less goulash than Greenmarket. Local farmers supply Gutenbrunner with lemon thyme for his pike, heirloom tomatoes for his lamb salad, and the sweet strawberries that garnish his elderflower sorbet. Don't miss the quark dumplings. • 344 W. 11th St. (212-352-2300). (M–E)

Manhattan

Lower New York

★ Alfanoose
This spotless but otherwise nondescript falafel joint flanked by $10 discount emporiums, makes the best—and neatest—falafel sandwich in town. Co-owner Mouhamad Shami meticulously rolls his expertly seasoned falafel and fresh condiments in an unusually thin and pliant pita, like a burrito, so that all the harmonious components merge in every bite. It's also a great source for Middle Eastern appetizers, flatbreads as well as suberb lamb or vegetarian kibbeh. • 150 Fulton St. (212-349-3622). (I)

Bari
Downstairs, this perpetually bustling café attracts SoHo shoppers taking time out for espresso or a glass of wine, and a view of the always entertaining street scene. Ascend the spiral staircase for a more substantial meal in the loftlike dining room, which features a woodburning oven for pizzas, and dishes like spice-rubbed duck breast with bok choy. • 529 Broadway, at Spring St. (212-431-4350). (M)

Bayard's
The dining room is stark and commanding, like the setting for an A. R. Gurney play about a reunion in a boys' school. But hardwood, barrel- chaired, shipshape Americana is the other side of the moon compared with your normal restaurant landscape; you have to be in awe of its austerity. Whether you succumb to Eberhard Muller's transformation of Bayard's menu is not as sure a given. One night the honey-mustard glaze on the lamb is enhancing, one night smothering. Halibut can float on a broth of tarragon, or sink like the *Andrea Dorea*. This is a potentially great vessel in need of a compass. • One Hanover Square (212-514-9454). (E)

★ Bouley Bakery
Love him or hate him, there's no denying that the famously obstreperous David Bouley—bouncing between this kitchen and Danube—gets the job done. And his loyal clientele gratefully lap it up in the ethereal form of degustation menus revolving around superlative seasonal ingredients like skate steamed with fresh chamomile, say, or organic baby lamb with eggplant moussaka. • 120 W. Broadway (212-964-2525). (M–E)

Capsouto Frères
Landmark French bistro with talked-about soufflés. Flemish-style building hosts local business folks at lunch. Dinner is a New York mix of neighborhood regulars, tourists, and trekkers from uptown. Dishes to try include the terrine Provençal and the roast duckling with ginger-and-cassis sauce. • 451 Washington St. (212-966-4900). (M–E)

★ Chanterelle
The Waltucks, Karen and David, have specific ideas about how to make an evening unforgettable. The walls are without art. You will hear no music. Chairs are huge; plates are, too. The goal is to get you to concentrate solely on who you are with and what you are about to be presented—the stunning juxtapositions of David's quail and star anise, lamb with cumin crust, crabs in ginger and strawberry mille-feuille with elderflower sorbet. • 2 Harrison St. at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E)

Clay
A small, sleek space filled with a stylish, young NoLIta crowd as crazy about the soju-litchi martinis as they are about the interpretive Korean dishes, including bibimbop, seafood pajun, and smoked tea duck. • 202 Mott St. (212-625-1105). (M)

Divine Bar
The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates. Selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. • 55 Liberty St., second floor (212-791-WINE). (I–M)

Ecco
Old-world charm, an excellent seasonal antipasto, and classicly prepared pastas, veal chops, lobster fra diavolo, and osso buco. Very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. Live piano music on Friday and Saturday night. • 124 Chambers St. (212-227-7074). (M)

Félix
Parisian bistro conveniently situated on SoHo's version of the Champs-Élysées, serving escargot and other Gallic standards. The atmosphere, as in most territory south of Houston, is stylishly casual. • 340 W. Broadway (212-431-0021). (M)

Photograph by Patrik Rytikangas.

The Greatest Bar on Earth
This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers and, of course, tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M)

★ Honmura An
While the management doesn't care about your entrance clout at Moomba, it all too obviously plays favorites. Most emphatic, however, is its sanctimoniousness about soba and udon noodles. Still, you won't be disappointed—unless you don't take the menu seriously when it claims that a dish is built around a single giant shrimp. • 170 Mercer St. (212-334-5253). (M–E)

★ The Mercer Kitchen
Within Christian Liagre's conversion of a subterranean catacomb into a sultry, intimately shadowy quartet of fluid yet diverse sectors, executive chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten reveals how a few ingredients can create flavors that are lucid and compelling. Olive and radicchio join stewed rabbit, mint and coriander ring sea bass carpaccio, tomato soup is sparked by chili pepper and crabmeat. You may be sorry you never sprang for that loft on Spring. • 99 Prince St. (212-966-5454). (E)

★ Montrachet
No matter how many more restaurants the indefatigable Drew Nieporent has up his sleeve, this one's his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. The wine list is killer. • 239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (212-219-2777). (E)

Morton's of Chicago
The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge and the quality is consistent. And in case you hadn't noticed, beef is back. Again. • 90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E)

Omen
Step off this quiet SoHo side street, and you're suddenly transported to Kyoto—a feeling that's reinforced by the traditional menu and decorative calligraphy and ceramics. • 113 Thompson St. (212-925-8923). (M–E) AE only

★ Pearl Oyster Bar
Milos may have a fish display as big as this joint's entire counter, but nothing can match this kitchen's preparatory skills. This ain't no Carnival Cruise. Keep your elbows in and your chin down, all the better to acknowledge a clam chowder revved up with smoky bacon, mussels in mustard cream, and a nutty grilled pompano in herbs. • 18 Cornelia St. (212-691-8211). (M)

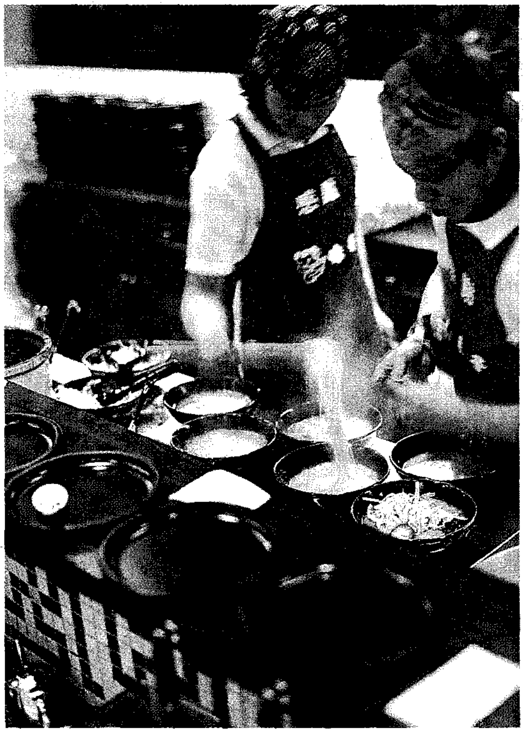
★ Peasant
Peasant is exactly right. From its stunningly backlit brick-walled kitchen that features only open-fire cooking to its incredibly appealing Tuscan menu, chef-owner Frank De Carlo has reason to bust his buttons every night, and you have almost too many reasons to undo a couple of yours. And thanks to some recent soundproofing, you no longer need to shout to get your share of impeccably al dente pastas, and meltingly tender osso buco in a risottolike nest of farro. • 194 Elizabeth St. (212-965-9511). (M)

★ 71 Clinton Fresh Food
Is there much call for Scottish salmon wrapped in avocado at the intersection of Clinton and Rivington Streets? Well, yes, judging by the hungry crowd cooling its heels at the bar. Jean Georges alum Wylie Dufresne cooks seemingly complicated, easy-to-eat food like beer-braised short ribs geometrically sculpted into a perfect square; and parsley-root purée with a little parsley-root raft of lump crabmeat. (To eat, capsize and stir.) The chef's dad, a warm and punny presence on the floor, compiled the winning wine list. • 71 Clinton St. (212-614-6960). (M)

First Taste

Soupy Sales

A lot of ramen around town can be disappointing—overcooked noodles in bland broth. Not so at **Ajisen Noodle**, a 300-outlet chain of Japanese noodle shops that opened its first North American branch on Mott Street a few weeks ago. Their pork-based house soup—one of three broth bases along with curry and miso—topped with sliced roast pork, scallions, and hard-cooked egg, is rich and satisfying, the whole-wheat noodles tender but firm. Even better is the curiously named "noodle soup topped with steamed gristly ribs," with its even more curiously translated "tenderous ribs,"which turn out to be deeply flavored, slow-cooked boneless pork ribs. There's also a snack menu that includes perfect minced-pork gyoza, deliciously greasy fried-chicken nuggets, and bacon-wrapped asparagus; and everything on the menu is under $8 and absolutely *tenderous*. (14 Mott Street; 212-267-9680.)



Spring Street Natural
Before SoHo was *SoHo*—and aeons before anyone even conceived of NoLIta—this health-food hub was turning out mostly organic, life-sustaining fare, very similar to its present menu of grilled fresh fish, free-range poultry, and soy every which way. • 62 Spring St. (212-966-0290). (M)

★ Vine
It will take a lot of duck confit with sweet-potato hash to make a village in the canyons of Wall Street. But the bold pioneers at Vine are game to gamble. Their bull-market menu is big on seafood like lobster pan roast with corn fritters and coconut-curried grilled shrimp. There's a quick-service café and grocery next door, and private party space (plus extra lunch seating) downstairs in what used to be, and still resembles, bank vaults. • 25 Broad St. (212-344-8463). (E)

★ Wild Blue
It sounds like a bar right outside the NASA compound, but in fact, it's an intimate, upretentious room that doesn't try to compete with the famous view. Chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steak house in side dishes like creamed spinach and butternut-squash hash. Don't wait for a special occasion to take the 107-flight elevator ride. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E)

Windows on the World
Yes, tourists love it. But Michael Lomanaco's sophisticated American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs and lobster potpie with truffle cream manages to steal some attention away from the main attraction, that spectacular view of Manhattan Island. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. • 1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E)

Below 14th Street, East

★ Five Points
Every neighborhood needs a place with a good bar, a serious kitchen, and zero pretensions. NoHo has one in this Med-American restaurant, where a split log running down the center of the dining room conveys a babbling brook. Zen though that may sound, chef Marc Meyer's hearty cooking is more boldly passionate than coolly contemplative. Duck-and-foie gras sausage and wood-oven roasted Magret duck show enough spikiness to make you look down and go "hmmmm" before you go back to the conversation. • 31 Great Jones St. (212-253-5700). (M)

★ Flor's Kitchen
Flor Villazan's family recipes are the South American equivalent of its surrounding neighborhood's Ukrainian comfort food: solid, soulful, and filling. You could easily make a meal of appetizers, like spongy arepas stuffed with chicken or scrambled eggs (or, this being the East Village, tofu and vegetables); Jamaican patty-like empanadas criollas; and the deliciously sweet cachapa, which arrives off the griddle under a blanket of melting mild white cheese. • 149 First Avenue (212-387-8949). (I)

★ Gotham Bar & Grill
What began with an unfocused menu of Americana in a raucous eighties-style grand café has mellowed over two decades into a trusted classic with chef-partner Alfred Portale relentlessly pursuing perfection in the kitchen. Settle into a cocoon of relaxed and confident service—informal but informed, friendly but unintrusive. Then, depending on the season and the market, rediscover Portale's discipline and the refinement of his taste in a lush truffle-oil-perfumed risotto with caramelized sweet turnips, duck confit, and savoy cabbage. Or in a rustic and garlicky white-bean soup with floats of rabbit confit and wilted greens. Or in seared yellowfin, caramelized and tender, propped alongside pappardelle rolled around caponata in which each vegetable is like a jewel. • 12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (E)

Osso Buco
Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl. (212-645-4525). Also 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M)

Siren
Aside from some strange and funny cabaret acts and a D.J. spinning to a boisterous young crowd, the spotlight

Photograph by Kenneth Chen

at this East Village mini supper club is on chef Patrick Fromm's accomplished French-and-Asian-accented American cooking. Try the triple-tiered appetizer trays the menu calls "trilogies," which include a choice of everything from spicy "lollipop" wings to foie gras to sashimi, or opt for more substantial fare like homemade tagliolini with wild mushrooms and barbecued filet mignon. • 12 St. Marks Place (212-995-9100). (M–E)

Below 14th Street, West

★ Babbo

Ever try goat cheese tortellini dusted in dried orange and wild fennel pollen? Or spicy lamb sausage romanced by mint love letters and a paste of sweet peas? Get ready to crave them. Ingredients you didn't expect or never heard of become unforgettable. Mario Batali's original yet airy Italian cooking will stun, fool, bewitch and ultimately obsess you. Just get it together to make another reservation before you leave. • 110 Waverly Pl. (212-777-0303). (E)

★ Blue Hill

Alex Urena's seasonal American menu draws on his cooking tour of France and Spain, which is where he picked up the haute habit of garnishing food with foam (to wit: a delicious asparagus soup with Parmesan froth). But despite a certain culinary trendiness, the atmosphere couldn't be more congenial or the service less pretentious. The room is pretty, too, comfortable and sophisticated, and the three-sided limestone bar accommodates diners and drinkers alike. • 75 Washington Pl. (212-539-1776). (M–E)

★ Do Hwa

Jenny Kwak and her mother Myung Ja try to familiarize diners with their home-style Korean cooking with family-style dinners for four, as well as various combinations of dumplings, spicy pancakes, stews, sautés, and the barbecue dishes that provide all the drama. If you're a do-it-yourself type, request a table with a built-in grill. • 55 Carmine St. (212-444-1224). (M)

★ Meigas

The décor is a little goofy and the location, on Hudson Street, in the Siberia of West SoHo, is a bust. But chef Luis Bollos's kitchen produces the best Spanish cuisine (Galician, actually) in town. In his hands, hefty dishes like braised oxtail croquettes and roast suckling pig appear light, almost candied. His gazpacho—a light confection, loaded with Maine lobster—makes the usual approximations of this dish look like crankcase oil. Trendy Iberian jellies and foams are mostly relegated to dessert, of which a wondrous chocolate layer ganache is best. • 350 Hudson St. (212-627-5800). (M–E)

★ Peanut Butter & Co.

Smooth or chunky is only the beginning: Savor the sticky stuff 21 different ways at this kitschy café, where you're transported back to elementary school with one bite of "ants on a log," celery sticks slathered with the peanut butter of your choice and studded with raisins. Request your Elvis (grilled peanut butter, banana, honey, bacon) on whole wheat if you must, though we're certain the King would disapprove. There must be a mom in the kitchen; sandwiches come with chips and carrot sticks, and they'll even cut off the crusts for you. • 240 Sullivan St. (212-677-3995). (I–M)

Tio Pepe

A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. • 168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I–M)

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

★ Bolo

Spanish food doesn't possess the big flavors that have attracted so many Americans to southwestern fare, but chef Bobby Flay has the audacity to inject some and the skill to make it work. In an unfortunate room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, items as modest-sounding as baby clams steamed in green-onion broth, tuna brushed with honey, and paella with saffron rice exhibit pure bravado. • 23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200). (E)

★ City Bakery

No one comes close to Maury Rubin at satisfying our grown-up snacking impulse. Heavenly tarts, perfectly textured cookies and brownies, lusciously tart lemonades, ultra-thick and creamy hot chocolate—even homemade marshmallows—beckon irresistibly from the counter. Pre-dessert, there are inspired sandwiches like roasted pear and ricotta salata and the only salad bar we obsess over. • 22 E. 17th St. (212-366-1414). (I–M)

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel

Commuters and business travelers can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal from the French-influenced American menu. • 42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M–E)

★ Gramercy Tavern

Tavern has become Danny Meyer's most appealing restaurant, with a no reservations discount bar room to make one churlish for not living or working nearby. Chef Tom Colicchio pairs foods folks crave with elements they usually don't. Roast sirloin of beef comes with braised beef cheeks. Crabmeat fondue contains sea urchin. Not only does each gamble pay off, but so tickled are diners by their nascent daring that on their next visit, damned if they don't demand sweetbreads with Jerusalem artichokes and roasted cod with brussels sprouts. • 42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (M–E)

Meli Melo

This cheerful neighborhood spot offers a very reasonable fixed-price dinner—$31.50 for four courses. The seafood-heavy French menu has Asian and Mediterranean touches in dishes like seared tuna with baby bok choy and rack of lamb with couscous. • 110 Madison Ave., nr. 29th St. (212-686-5551). (M)

Mi

A talented team of cooks with impressive-sounding résumés (Mercer Kitchen, Hatsuhana) collaborate on a menu including sushi and sashimi, pad Thai, Malaysian spare ribs, and Korean bibimbob at this four-flavor pan-Asian restaurant. • 66 Madison Ave., nr. 27th St. (212-252-8888). (M–E)

★ Veritas

Does the wine list make the restaurant? Luckily, if you've got a chef like Scott Bryan whipping up arctic-char carpaccio with warm fingerling potato salad and a sublime, marrow-and-wine-fortified fillet of beef, it doesn't have to. His elegant American fare ($68 prix fixe only) perfectly complements the massive cellar, a joint obsession of the owners, who seem to take intense pleasure in sharing their private collection with the paying public. • 43 E. 20th St. (212-353-3700). (E)

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar

This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. • 234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I–M)

Diabla

Appetizers to be eaten tapas-style and entrées like herb-crusted scallops with grilled-vegetable tamales and sage-and-lime roast pork with chiles rellenos draw a neighborhood crowd to this Chelsea Mexican restaurant. • 202 Ninth Ave., nr. 22nd St. (646-638-1111). (M)

Ohm

An all-in-one entertainment center offering dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an eclectic menu including sesame chicken tenders, Black Angus steak, and grilled salmon with lemon-caper beurre blanc. • 16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E)

★ The Red Cat

Not every artist is starving, and the ones with bank accounts and hearty appetites would do well to make this their home away from home among the West Chelsea galleries. Hanging lanterns, barn siding, and artwork contribute to the funky décor, and the bar is the roomy, welcoming sort that solo diners find appealing. It's hard to find a clunker on the Med-American menu. The quick saute of zucchini with toasted almonds is something your mother would never have imagined—a vegetable that could spoil your appetite. • 227 Tenth Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-242-1122). (M)

World Yacht Dining Cruises

Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown and Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson among others. Jacket required. • Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Avra

Just as they are uptown at sister restaurant Trata, Fulton Street-fresh whole fish are priced here by the pound and described on the menu the way some restaurants' wine lists like to talk about their wines. *Barbounia*, for example, is a "Mediterranean delicacy that tends to be bony but flavorful." Elsewhere on the menu, spinach pie goes Gallic as spanakopita napoleon and grape leaves get an unexpected stuffing of raw salmon, tuna, and cucumber. • 141 E. 48th St. (212-759-8550). (M–E)

Café Centro

A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. • 200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M)

Caviar Russe

The owners of this caviar bar and boutique are also importers, which means that you're getting your Beluga—and golden Osetra, and Sevruga—right from the source. The petite restaurant ensconced in a midtown townhouse will gladly feed you a spoonful or a more substantial meal, like a foie gras sandwich with Armagnac-soaked figs, or steak tartare with baby-beet-and-black-truffle salad. Afternoon tea and prix fixe menus also available. • 538 Madison Ave., nr. 54th St. (212-980-5908). (M–E)

Coldwaters

Lots of fresh, simply prepared seafood—steamers, soft-shell crabs, lobsters, and grilled shrimp and scallops—in a casual atmosphere. Every dinner comes with garlic bread and all the salad you can eat, nearly anytime you want to. Brunch is served daily, and the kitchen stays open until 3 A.M. • 988 Second Ave., at 52nd St. (212-888-2122). (M)

★ Della Femina

It might be easier to score a table here than at the infamous ad man's East Hampton address, but don't read too much into that: the souped-up seasonal American menu tastes just as good in the 212 area code. There's a little country and a little city in his cold corn soup with black truffle coulis, and Dover sole "fish sticks" with a caviar remoulade. And you can almost smell Georgica beach in the lobster roll. • 131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (E)

Divine Bar

This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I–M)

Giambelli 50th Ristorante

Upscale Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. • 46 E. 50th St. (212-688-2760). (M)

★ Kuruma Zushi

Nobu and Bondst might draw celebrity sushi fans, but this is where you'll find the true fanatics, willing to squander their savings on superlatively fresh sushi and sashimi in nondescript surroundings one flight above a midtown side street. Cognoscenti put themselves and their taste buds in the nimble hands of the sushi chef, who amazes with imported treasures like Japanese aji, sea eel, and prawn-Kuruma ebi. • 7 E. 47th St. (212-317-2802). (E)

★ Lespinasse

Old-fashioned, luxurious hotel dining is not everyone's idea of fun these days—even with the possibility of a noontime flirtation and posh hotel rooms so handy. But chef Christian Delouvrier's cooking is anything but a bore. His butternut squash soup is revved up with chunks of duck breast and crusty foie gras, lamb rack and loin is touched with Chartreuse and coffee, and baby pig with cassoulet is carefully sauced to keep it from getting too rustically porky. With inventive cooking like this, even the recently redone room—so French and namby-pamby when it ought to be robber-baron American—seems pleasantly mellowed. • 2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E)

Nino's Positano

An upscale Italian restaurant specializing in food from the southern regions, Positano in particular. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

★ Oyster Bar

Unperturbed by the arriviste competition in the food court next door, the jewel of the pre-renovation Terminal continues to serve superlative pan roasts and clam chowders, and an overwhelming assortment of East and West Coast oysters. The sprawling subterranean space has the hustle-bustle feel of a cafeteria, which its snaking counters resemble, but don't be fooled—you pay for the privilege of eating under that vaulted tile ceiling. • Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M–E)

★ Peacock Alley

In this cushioned cocoon of a dining room off the lobby of the Waldorf Astoria, chef Laurent Gras—a disciple of Alain Ducasse—offers diners a chance to mix and match bite-size "courses" chosen from categories like Ocean and River, Field and Forest, and Farm. Or put yourself entirely in his hands with the seven-course "tête à tête" menu, each streamlined dish composed of just two ingredients achieving, in Gras's words, a "single clean note." • 301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E)

Tropica

Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the conch chowder and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves some of the most imaginative Caribbean-inspired seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. • 200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-867-6767). (M–E)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne

Maybe you're not an out-of-towner on a spending spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hotel restaurant overlooking a particularly swank stretch of Fifth Avenue. Chef Oliver Dudler's modern French menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-expected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a trio of soups), foie gras (with red-onion compote), and poached Dover sole. The $50 prix fixe dinner is a (relative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M–E)

Bombay Palace

This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent Indian breads. • 30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M)

★ Christer's

No, Swedish food isn't all about salmon. But we'd be disconsolate if Christer Larsson ever stopped serving his archetypical oak-board-baked filet. And even though he aquits himself well with the compulsory gravlax and herring, he's a gifted cook who borrows freely—and imaginatively—from other culinary styles. The cozy décor, on the other hand, is David Rockwell's whimsical riff on a Scandinavian hunting-lodge theme, with silver fish "scales," a glowing fireplace, rough-hewn walls, and Marimekko colors. • 145 W. 55th St. (212-974-7224). (E)

★ Del Frisco's

Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone looks like? This is without question the most urbanely elegant steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. Now if they can only figure out how to get their staff up to the level of their surroundings and kitchen. The place is New York landmark potential. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E)

★ Island Burgers and Shakes

This Hell's Kitchen storefront with a Southern California-vibe specializes in burgers and chicken sandwiches, or churascos, in countless combinations and served on great bread and with superior condiments. A blackened churasco is almost painfully spicy and needs only minor embellishment (some blue cheese, or avocado and Monterey jack) to gain admission into our sandwich hall of fame. Great malteds douse the flames. • 766 Ninth Ave., nr. 51st St. (212-307-7394). (I) ($)

La Veranda

Northern Italian food. A popular theater district spot offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta and brunch on weekends. Free parking (with dinner) from 5 P.M. to 1 A.M. • 163 W. 47th St. (212-391-0905). (M)

★ Local

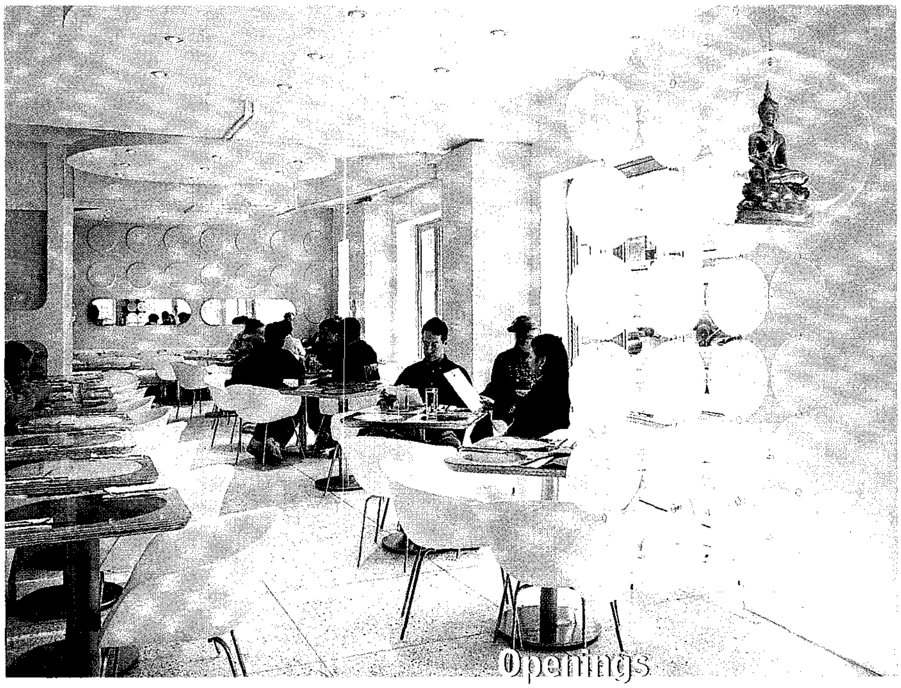
If your idea of Theater District dining is a lackluster prix fixe, this stylish newcomer and its focused, flavorful cooking will open your eyes—and with entrées venturing into the mid-thirty-dollar range—your wallet. Previously seen stirring the pots for Ron Perelman, chef Franklin Becker has the knack. We're particularly fond of his Vidalia onion and black olive tart, and knockout sea scallops riding a crab cake. • 224 W. 47th St. (212-921-2005). (M–E)

Martini's

Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

★ Molyvos

Adorned with photos of Greek island life, ceramics, and folk art, this sprawling midtown taverna is a stylishly rustic showcase for chef Jim Botsacos's serious Mediterranean menu. The window tables up front are ideal for nibbling meze and sipping something from the Greek wine list, but for a true taste of the isles—or the way we'd like to imagine them—go for something gutsier: the melting lamb shanks, clay-pot-baked



Openings

Family Thais

Could it be sheer coincidence that three new Thai restaurants have opened in the Village just in time for Thai New Year this Friday? **Spice** (pictured; 60 University Place, 212-982-3758), the chainlet with outposts in Chelsea and on the Upper East Side, has boldly gone where few have gone before: one block south of rival Lemongrass Grill, and a few doors down from the similarly named (but, to complicate matters, Indian) Cafe Spice. The new branch is ultramod, with molded-plastic seats and sliding bathroom doors, but its menu shares a striking similarity with **Why Curry?**, another, more dimly lit newcomer, with lots of wood and exposed brick (126 St. Marks Place; 212-473-1620). Both offer the standard selection of satays, spring rolls, hot-and-sour soups, stir-fried noodles, and coconut-milk curries. But that's not all they have in common—the owners are brothers. And farther downtown, the pan-Asian Rice Box has morphed into **Kai Kai Thai Eatery**, a bigger, better version of a sister takeout shop on Avenue A, featuring less familiar, aggressively seasoned delicacies like a chicken-and-egg steamed bun, crunchy-catfish-and-green-mango salad, and a Thai-spiced seafood medley of shrimps, clams, squid, and scallops. (78 East 1st Street; 212-777-2552.)

Photograph by Carina Salvi.

with orzo and tomato, or "Aglaia's moussaka," unfinishably rich (but still worth the attempt). Desserts offer a few surprises, like the mastic ice cream, a resinous flavor unknown even to Ben and Jerry. • 871 Seventh Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-582-7500). (M)

Morrell Wine Bar & Cafe

Pity the poor chef of a restaurant that sells Napa's renowned Dominus by the glass ($60). You might think the food can't stand a chance against a 2,000-bottle list and over a hundred by-the-glass selections. But Michael Haimowitz acquits himself well in this velvet-upholstered duplex across from the skating rink. Not to be outdone, his kitchen incorporates vino into the victuals, as in Barolo-braised lamb shank and a foie gras club with *porto* marmalade. • 1 Rockefeller Plaza (212-262-7700). (M–E)

Palio

Stylish midtown duplex restaurant, with a famous ground-floor muraled bar depicting the Palio race and elegant preparations of Italian dishes like sliced hen pheasant on salad with white truffles, and monkfish ravioli with asparagus and fresh tomato. Jacket required. • 151 W. 51st St. (212-245-4850). (E)

Randolph's

Housed in the Warwick Hotel—which William Randolph Hearst built for his mistress, Marion Davies—this cozy restaurant and lounge has a lush, old-world feel and an eclectic menu of international snacks and entrées, from dim sum to a filet mignon sandwich. • 65 W. 54th St. (212-247-2700). (M–E)

Trattoria Dopo Teatro

Famous for its signature open ravioli of lobster and lamb, the menu also offers an across-the-board selection of regional Italian specialties like braised baby octopus with red peppers and onions and tagliolini with lemon zest and vodka. The dining room is decorated with Italian cinema stills and single-minded connoisseurs, and private parties can pursue their passions in the wine room, the grappa room, or the cigar lounge. • 125 W. 44th St. (212-869-2849). (M)

Utsav Festive India

The bar of this regional Indian restaurant is located at street level while the contemporary dining room is built into a bridge spanning two midtown skyscrapers. The lunch buffet costs only $12.95, and à la carte entrées include ginger rack of lamb, tandoori filet mignon, and Bengali fish paturi. • 1185 Sixth Ave., nr. 46th St. (212-575-2525). (M)

Zanzibar

The crowd at this loungy Hell's Kitchen restaurant is as eclectic as the menu. African, Arabic, Asian, and Mediterranean touches appear in dishes like tuna and ginger ravioli; mussel soup with garlic, chickpeas, and cilantro; and a root vegetable and peanut stew served over rice. • 645 Ninth Ave, nr. 45th St. (212-957-9197). (M)

57th–60th Streets

★ Atlas

Each dish has a litany of preparations, and every single impressive yet complicated one of them gets explained to the diner. Chef Paul Liebrandt's food—marinated eels with watermelon, tagliatelle with cepes, and tuna with mini green-apple strudels—exhibits remarkable invention, though some dishes could use more restraint. All the house is missing is the confidence to let its guests sit back and observe Atlas's enjoyable qualities for themselves. • 40 Central Park So. (212-759-9191). (M–E)

Café Botanica

The Essex House hotel's other restaurant—the one without Alain Ducasse is an airy, plant-filled respite from the congestion of Central Park South. Sunday brunch is a neighborhood fixture; at night, sample the chef's renditions of grilled salmon with pisto manchego, and duck magret with finger potatoes and tapenade. • 160 Central Park So. (212-484-5120). (E)

★ Felidia

In between writing cookbooks and taping segments of "Lidia's Italian Table" for PBS, Lidia Bastianich, the matriarch of the clan responsible in part for Lupa, Esca, and Becco, oversees this elegant bastion of Italian cooking. But chef Fortunato Nicotra deserves credit for a new breath of energy at the range. Sauces are lighter, pastas still wonderful, and entrees get deftly tweaked. The wine list always impresses, and olive oil connoisseurs can spring for a $7 comparative tasting. • 243 E. 58th St. (212-758-1479). (E)

Gabriel's Bar & Restaurant

Just four blocks from Lincoln Center, this acclaimed Northern Italian favorite of theatergoers and neighborhood regulars is unintimidatingly comfortable and culinarily sophisticated at the same time. Hearty dishes include gnocchi in duck ragù, braised short ribs with a semolina custard, and wood-grilled tuna with fresh horseradish. The hot chocolate has a cult following. • 11 W. 60th St. (212-956-4600). (M–E)

★ Norma's

Breakfast is primordial for everyone we know who equates French toast or biscuits with Mom and unconditional love. That's why we think the Parker Meridien's spiffy Norma's, with its exuberant all-day breakfast, is worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize. Pancakes by a mom on Prozac. Complimentary fruit-smoothie shots and a duo of croissants oozing smoked-salmon-flecked scrambled eggs. If there really can be too much of a good thing, then breakfast here ought to be against the law. • 118 W. 57th St. (212-708-7460). (M)

★ The Russian Tea Room

The late Warner LeRoy left New York this spectacle of a parting gift, and for polishing up the fanciful red and green frippery alone, he deserves our undying gratitude and a Landmarks Preservation Commission award. Whether you love or hate the trout swimming inside the acrylic bear, you can't fault dishes like borscht and Georgian-spiced seared halibut. • 150 W. 57th St. (212-974-2111). (E)

Above 60th Street, East Side

★ Cello

Every appointment (Bernaudaud dishes, monochromatic flowers, and almost reflective mahogany walls) serves as an elegant yet unobtrusive backdrop for the whisper-light delicacies that emerge from chef Laurent Tourondel's kitchen. Rougets glistening like bloodstones in a raw tomato sauce. Turbot that melts like cotton candy. Lamb as velvety as foie gras. And frozen crême bruleé that must have the Häagen-Dazs people turning like dervishes. Cello also has the most beautiful new private dining room in town. • 53 E. 77th St. (212-517-1200). (E)

★ Daniel

Daniel Boulud is blessed with the gift of being able to add familiar flavors into the most stunning of summations, like walnuts and foie gras that intensify the lush gaminess of quail. He routinely triumphs in why-didn't-anyone-else-think-of-it feats like finding what envelopes sweetbreads to leave you without that heady aftertaste—suspending them between a rhubarb glaze and spinach purée. And his chocolate bombe soars like no other. • 60 E. 65th St. (212-288-0033). (E)

Etou

"Fusion is indefeasible" reads the motto printed on the menu of this Upper East Side Japanese restaurant from the owners of Flushing's Tawainese-Chinese-Japanese fusion joint, Laifood. To support their thesis, the kitchen dabbles in Thai spices, Mexican chiles, even mozzarella cheese to jazz up otherwise traditionally prepared Japanese dishes. • 1420 Third Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-249-0738). (M)

Mark's

Decked out like a private London club, with plump, tasseled pillows to nestle against. Fine French-American cooking (torchon of foie gras with cranberry-kumquat compote, pan-roasted lobster with Armagnac jus), award-winning wine list, and a Willy Wonka–worthy chocolate tea. • 25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E)

Nino's

Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

★ Payard Patisserie & Bistro

You'll never shiver and blush the way Francois Payard's Nôtre Dame, Fontainbleau, St.-Honoré, or devilish chocolate tart make you when they hijack your taste buds to a place they've never been and will forever yearn to return. If all this sweetness weren't enough, Payard's chef Philippe Bertineau concocts first and second courses that match François's touted thirds. • 1032 Lexington Ave., nr. 73rd St. (212-717-5252). (M–E)

Trata

With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood, this bustling Upper East Side restaurant offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. • 1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ Jean Georges

Are you ready for an amazing evening that is not about you? Nothing and no one at Jean Georges steals center stage from the wondrous creations of its extraordinary chef, Jean-Georges Vongerichten. If you're okay with such divine supplication, prepare to be open-mouthed whenever you're not chewing. Nothing you encounter will fail to dazzle, from the simplest dish of asparagus and morels au jus to the unexpected combo of sweetbreads en cocotte with ginger and licorice. • 1 Central Park West (212-299-3900). (E)

★ Picholine

Terrance Brennan doesn't want to be the Upper West Side's best chef. He's got the whole city in his sights, which explains why his French-Mediterranean menu aspires to such lofty heights. Rustic nightly specials like cassoulet and seven-hour lamb shank are earthy counterpoint to menu selections like sea-urchin panna cotta and truffle-steeped poached halibut. The wild-mushroom-and-duck risotto has its own fan club, as does fromager Max McCalman, a true cheese whiz. • 35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E)

★ Ruby Foo's

In what might be Auntie Mame's duplex during her high mah-jongg period, the black-bean sauce is vibrant and the wok steamed lobster is worth its weight in jade. And regardless of where you sit, you have to walk down the Mamescent staircase at least once. Screaming "Live! Live! Live!" is optional. • 2182 Broadway, at 77th St. (212-724-6700). (M)

Sapphire Indian Cuisine

A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. • 1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M)

Brooklyn

★ The Grocery

Like Savoy, where the Grocery's co-chef-owners, Charles Kiely and Sharon Pachter met, their 30-seat storefront mom-and-pop shop exudes a low-key charm that's hard to resist. Their Brooklyn location, however, allows them to charge sub-SoHo prices for inspired dishes like duck-confit strudel; seared pork loin with mashed sweet potatoes and roasted pears; and Eden Brook trout stuffed with spinach and shallots with spaetzle. For dessert, there's a crème fraîche cheesecake with guava sorbet that couldn't possibly inhabit the same universe, never mind borough, as Junior's. • 288 Smith St. (718-596-3335). (M)

Queens

Water's Edge

Even if the voyage lasts just fifteen minutes, as the one does from East 34th Street to Long Island City, the ferry ride feels like an instant vacation. This one happens to be free if you're having dinner at this quiet, elegant space where every table has a view of Manhattan. Lively French-American fare like Maine-lobster soufflé and seared Copper River salmon with chanterelles and tarragon jus vie with the view for your attention. • 44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E) cue

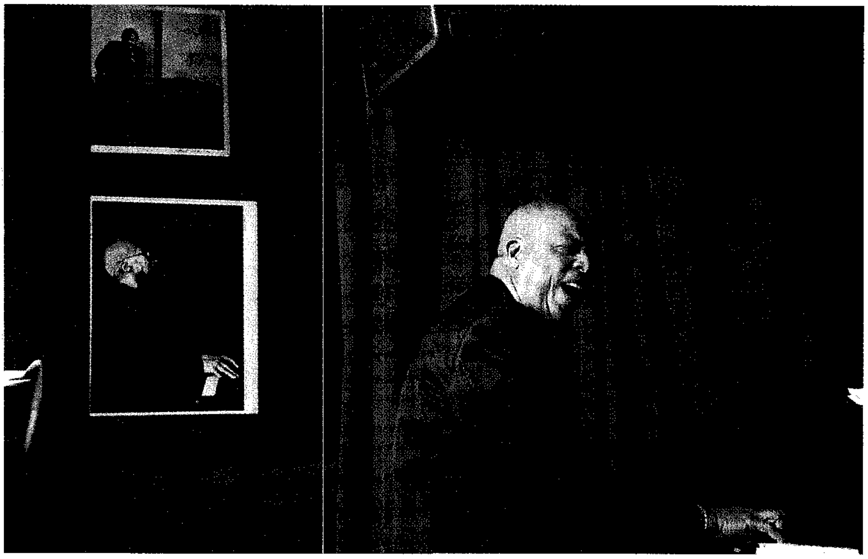
Nightlife

Edited by Ethan Brown

Performance

Valdés Victorious

He's known as one of the foremost practitioners of Latin jazz (especially after taking home the Grammy for the genre this year), but pianist **Chucho Valdés** (pictured) can also incorporate music from the rhythm-driven Afro-Cuban-jazz tradition, standards like "My Funny Valentine," and even salsa. Valdés's across-the-board virtuosity will no doubt be on full display during five nights of performances at the Village Vanguard—the site of his triumphant 1999 live recording for Blue Note—April 10 to 15. (See "Jazz.")



Concerts

"Loser's Lounge Presents: A Tribute to Harry Nilsson"
4/12–4/14 at 8. • Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-741-0391); $25.

St. Germain
4/13 at 8. • Roseland Ballroom, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171); $25.

Small Stages

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill
4/11–4/12: Asleep at the Wheel. 4/15: 98.7 KISS FM Gospel Brunch. 4/17: Molly Hatchet • 243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line
4/13: Kim Simmonds Duo. 4/14: David Johansen and the Harry Smiths. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom
4/10: Spacehog. 4/11: Me First and the Gimme Gimmes. 4/12: BS2000. 4/13–4/14: Rocket From the Crypt. 4/16: Fab Faux. 4/17: New Found Glory. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Irving Plaza
4/10: Frank Black and the Catholics. 4/11: "Outside Out"; Col. Bruce Hampton and the Code Talkers. 4/13: Dark Star Orchestra. 4/14: Mel C. 4/17: The Orb. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

Joe's Pub
An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: "Downtown Rock and Roll" with ever-present spinner Paul Sevigny. Tuesdays: Hip-hop and R&B with D.J. Rich Medina at "One." Wednesdays: The world-beat-oriented "Love Bazaar" with D.J. Kamala. Thursdays: "Benefit," a downtown music revue. Fridays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Saturdays: "Hideaway" with Kiki and Unik. Sundays: "Club Badd" with long-lost downtown icon Larry Tee. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory
4/10: Chicks on Speed. 4/11: Jess Klein; Stacy Earle; Lori McKenna. 4/12: Chicks on Speed; Sylvester Boy. 4/13–4/14: Mike Clark. 4/15: Ballin' the Jack. 4/16: Divabands presents: "Benefit for Afghan Women." 4/17: Rob Reddy Octet; Duck Baker/Mark Dresser Duo. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.

Manitoba's
Mondays: Beat Rodeo. Fridays: Adam Roth. • 99 Ave. B (212-982-2511).

Maxwell's
4/10: David J; Nina Hynes. 4/11: Charlie Hunter. 4/12: Tim Easton; Denice Franke. 4/13: Tav Falco and Panther Burns; the Autumn Defense; the Cash Bros. • 1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge
4/10: Brian Henneman; Bob Hillman. 4/11: Artists in Residence; Ol'Yeller. 4/12: The Autumn Defense; the Cash Brothers. 4/13: Grand Mal; Birdwatcher. 4/16: Ours; Bleu. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

S.O.B.'s
4/11: Noche Hip-Hop. 4/12: Angie Stone. • 204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).

The Village Underground
Former Tramps booker Steve Weitzman brings his eclectic sensibility to a new smoke-free club in the West Village. 4/12: Robbie Fulks. 4/13: Crooked Fingers. 4/14: Tav Falco and Panther Burns. • 130 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745).

Wetlands
Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 4/10–4/11: J Mascis and the Fog. 4/12: The Big Wo; Rana. 4/13: Fighting Gravity. 4/4: DJ Wally; Odi. 4/16: The Perfume; Electron and Friends. 4/17: Bathtub Gin. • 161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600). $.

Clubs

"Love Affair"
John Davis' new after-work Thursday-night party with D.J.'s MKL and Jerome Syndenham is full of all the flutey deep house you've come to expect from the promoter who built the "Body & Soul" empire. Thankfully, this plush way-West space is a nice departure from Vinyl's dingy dance floor. • 431 W. 16th St., bet. Ninth and and Tenth Aves. (212-714-7116 or www.jdproductionsnyc.com).

Centro-Fly
Once dominated by the bottle-service set, Centro-Fly has now achieved a near-perfect mix of Wall Streeters with loosened ties, D.J.-bag-carrying dance-music fanatics, and track-suited deep-house heads. Tuesdays: Promoter Noah Tepperberg's fabulous "Tuesday-BabyTuesday" goes head-to-head with Spa's model-centric Tuesday party. Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo and big-name special guests. Fridays: "GBH" ("Great British House"), a refugee from Cheetah, makes a bid for the big room of Centro-Fly. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant." • 45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).

Cheetah
A jungle-themed club with a spacious dance floor and a small yet powerful sound system. Tuesdays: Latin music with reggae and R&B thrown in the mix. D.J. Camilo spins. Thursdays: A super-exclusive (invite only, they say), hyper-stealthy party called "Aerodynamic" thown by promoters Allen West and Samuel "Tone" Barnes. D.J. Jolene spins. Fridays: "The World House Project." Saturdays: Thumping tribal house and live percussionists at "Cherchez La Femme." Sundays: "Boys Nite" D.J. Merritt spins at "Mardi Gras." • 12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).

Frank's Lounge
A bare-bones bar and dance spot, which hosts Lorie and E-Man's frenzied but low-key house-music party "Bang the Party" every Friday. The party, which has been at venues all over town from the 205 Club to Baktun, is just now settling into its own groove. • 660 Fulton St., at S. Elliott St., Brooklyn (212-726-1322).

Fun
This sprawling, bi-level, warehouselike space doesn't book big-name D.J. talent, but it's got one of the coolest interiors in clubland, with huge projections of Japanese *anime*, a vertiginous yet comfy balcony area, and a seemingly gravity-defying D.J. booth. Thursdays: Cyberfetish party "Click+Drag." Fridays: Dinesh, Reid Speed, and Thom H. spin two-step garage at "Drive-By." Saturdays: The Wicked Crew and "N'Ice" D.J.'s Holmar and A. Gram present "The Golden Boys." • 130 Madison St., under the Manhattan Bridge (212-964-0303); $5.

Ground Rules

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Photograph by Jack Vartoogian.

Limelight
The Limelight is back from the dead thanks to its powerhouse weekend nights, which see the likes of Detroit techno icon Jeff Mills and the trance heavies of the "Gatecrasher" crew grace the turntables. The mazelike club's renaissance comes just in time, as other megaclubs like Twilo have become uncomfortably packed, verging on the claustrophobic. • 660 Sixth Ave., at 20th St. (212-807-7780).

The Roxy
Fridays, the Roxy enlists D.J. Jason Ojeda for the relaunch of its night for the weekender straight crowd. Saturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on the bar. • 515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.

Shine
This downtown spot is now host to excellent, enthusiastically received D.J.-oriented nights as well as up-and-coming rock and dance acts. Thursdays: The gloriously great D.J. Ron Trent and special guests like Phil Asher and Norman Jay. Fridays: The hip-hop-and-house-oriented "Fri-Daze." Saturdays: D.J. Greg Poole's dance-centric "Tremendous." • 285 W. Broadway (212-941-0900).

Spa
The health-and-wellness theme (white walls, bathrooms designed to look like saunas) is thankfully mostly unobtrusive, and the crowd is thankfully not excessively chic. Spa promoter Steven Lewis maintains the kind of balance between office *zhlubs*, club kids, and A-listers he pulled off so nicely in the early days of the now-defunct Life. Wednesdays: "Big Bad Dodgy Disco," with New Wave and rock spun by D.J. Paul Sevigny. Thursdays: Super-promoter Erich Conrad's "Glam," with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Marc Ronson and Grandmaster Flash spin hip-hop and R&B for the A-listers at "Hollywood 2000." • 76 E. 13th St. (212-388-1060).

Twilo
Never mind all the drug-bust drama: The real news here is that Twilo is leaving trance in the dust and fast becoming a progessive-house fan's wet dream thanks to sets from U.K. epic housers like Mauro Piccotto and Danny Howells. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays," a low-key alternative to the frenzied Friday nights. Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. • 530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).

Vinyl
The recent quality-of-life crackdowns have taken a toll on the club's once extraordinarily open vibe, but the parties—"Shelter" and "Body & Soul" in particular—continue to be strong. Fridays: Hard, trippy house from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early (before seven) or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. • 6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

Birdland
Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this boite serves up fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: from 5:30 to 7:30 P.M., David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra. 4/11–4/12: Trio Da Paz. 4/13–4/14: Moxie. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note
With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 4/10–4/15: Maynard Ferguson and Big Bop Noveau. • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

Cajun
A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. Regulars include Joe Muranyi, clarinetist for the last six years of Louis Armstrong's All Stars; Eddy Davis, a jazz banjoist; and Chuck Folds, a stride pianist and sometime accompanist to trumpet legend Doc Cheatham. • 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (212-691-6174).

City Hall
Fridays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. • 131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).

Deanna's
This Lower East Side jazz haunt run by singer Deanna Kirk should give Tonic a run for its money. Open Tuesday through Sunday. Kirk performs on most nights. • 107 Rivington St. (212-420-2258).

Detour
With no cover and top-notch young players, this Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magilligan. 4/10: Deanna Kirk Trio. 4/11: Vista Jazz Quintet. 4/12: Mr. Kite. 4/13: Mike Fahn Quintet. 4/14: Matt Hong Quartet. 4/16: Luis Perdomo Trio. 4/17: Vinson Valega and Friends. • 349 E. 13th St. (212-533-6212).

Iridium
In the surreal basement across from Lincoln Center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 4/10–4/15: Lonnie Smith Trio. • 44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).

"Jazz at Noon"
Lunchtime jam sessions every Friday at the San Martin Restaurant with some of jazz's hottest players. 4/13: Dick Sudhalter. • 143 E. 49th St. (212-832-0888) or www.jazzatnoon.com.

"Jazz at the Penthouse" with Hal Galpner
4/12–4/14 at 8. • Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, 165 W. 65th St. (212-721-6500). $45.

The Jazz Standard
A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mondays in March: The Howard Fishman Quartet. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 4/10–4/15: Abdullah Ibrahim Trio. • 116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).

Red Blazer
Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz Band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. • 32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).

Rose Center
The Rose Center is open until 8:45 P.M. Fridays; suggested admission price is $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $6 for children. 4/13: Dave Valentin Quartet. • American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100).

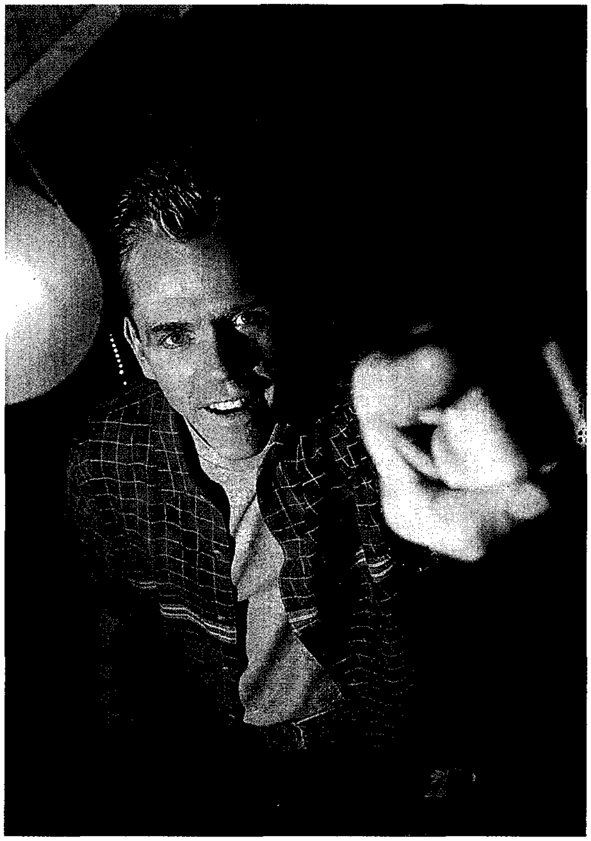
Showman's Café
Reopened right on 125th Street (though not, unfortunately, in its original location adjacent to the Apollo), the legendary jazz watering hole offers slow-cooked soul-jazz and funkified hard bop every night. No cover; two-drink minimum. • 375 E. 125th St. (212-864-8941). $.

Small's
Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. • 183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565).

Sweet Basil
An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 4/10–4/15: Beatle Jazz. • 88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).

Comedy

Green House



In the world of sitcoms, the Irish are the new Jews. No fewer than three of this season's network-TV shows feature fighting Irishmen: Brian Dennehy's *The Fighting Fitzgeralds*, Denis Leary's *The Job*, and *Titus*, which stars comic **Christopher Titus** (pictured) as a working-class hero struggling with an overbearing father. Now Titus will ride the emerald wave back to the far less glamorous shores of stand-up comedy, when he makes a pair of rare club appearances on April 11 and 12 at Carolines on Broadway.

Photograph by Randy Holmes/Fox.

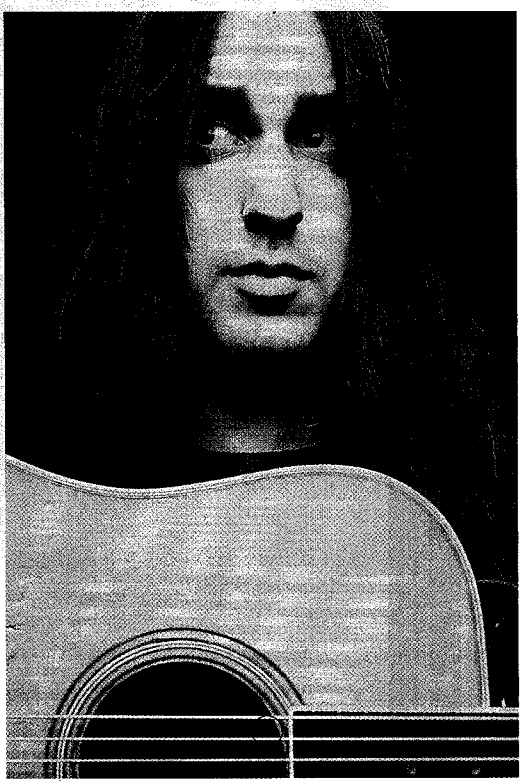
Tonic
Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 4/10: OACIS. 4/12: Derek Bailey Solo; Thurston Moore & Loren Mazzacane Connors. 4/14: Derek Bailey & Susie Ibarra. 4/17: Derek Bailey & Will Gaines; Rhodri Davies, Mark Wastell & Simon Fell. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.

Village Vanguard
Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 4/10–4/15: Chucho Valdés Quartet. • 178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.

Performance

Still Flyin' the Flannel

J Mascis (pictured) is known for his perpetually groggy voice and the feedback-heavy guitar style he pioneered with his band Dinosaur Jr. Curiously, though, he's maintained an iconic profile in the alt-rock world, which prefers to shun icons in the first place. Sonic Youth paid tribute to him on its anarchic song "Teen Age Riot," and *Spin* even dubbed him "God" way back when grunge was first trying on its flannel. So it's somehow not surprising that Mascis brought in two fellow underground stars (bassist Mike Watt, formerly of West Coast punk legends fIREHOSE and the Minutemen, and guitarist Ron Asheton, once of the Stooges) to tour with him in support of his recent solo album, *More Light*. The group's Iggy-rich set, which comes to the Wetlands April 10 and 11, was much buzzed about at the South-by-Southwest music conference last month. But Mascis is typically self-effacing when asked to explain how the trio came together. "I just wanted to do some gigs with some Stooges covers," he practically mumbles. Asheton, however, is a lot more animated when talking about the group. "Me and J have gone flat-out crazy onstage," he offers. "It's like dueling guitars up there!" Asheton also excitedly embraces his punk-rock-hero status. "I feel like an old, forgotten black bluesman," he says with a mischievous laugh, "being discovered by some young white boys!" (See "Small Stages.") E.B.



Photograph by Matt Anker/Retna.

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club
Animal House ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Shows Tues.–Thurs. at 9:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8,10, and midnight. • 82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).

Carolines on Broadway
In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 4/11-4/12: Christopher Titus. 4/13–4/15: Dave Chappelle. 4/17: Hot 97's "Phat Tuesday." • 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100).

Comedy Cellar
A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 4/16: Colin Quinn; Kevin Brennan; Nick DiPaolo; Macio; Godfrey. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Comic Strip
Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. • 1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).

Dangerfield's
Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. Through 4/15: Nancy Redman; Hood; Paul Mercurio; Brad Lowery; John Rizzo. • 1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).

Gotham
A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun.: New Talent Showcase; Wednesdays with Robert Klein. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 with a $10 cover; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 with a $15 cover. Two-drink minimum. 4/11: Robert Klein. 4/13–4/14: Mitch Fatel; Louis Ramey; Jim Gaffigan; Al Ducharme. • 34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).

"Spin Cycle Comedy"
Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. • King Size Laundromat, 178 Seventh Ave., at 20th St. (212-501-6016). Free.

Stand-up New York
Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. $12 cover. • 236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel
The Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) Through 4/21: Julie Wilson with Mark Hummel. • 59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place
A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. 4/16: Laurie Bricker. • 450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).

Cafe Carlyle
Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. • Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).

Cafe Pierre
Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebrates her fourteenth year at the Cafe Pierre with a special program called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years of American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. • Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195).

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books
Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11:00: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin's eleven-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. • 156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).

Don't Tell Mama
What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? Thursdays: "Seth's Broadway Chatterbox." Fridays: "The Next Big Broadway Musical." Saturdays at 8: "Poole Party!" Saturdays at 11: Tommy Femia presents "Judy Garland Live!" • 343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.

Feinstein's at the Regency
Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $50 Tues.–Fri.; $75 for the early show on Friday and all shows on Saturday; $50 food-and-drink minimum. 4/10–5/5: The Pizzarelli Family. • 540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).

FireBird Café
The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri.–Sat. at 9 and 11. $30 cover; $15 minimum. • 365 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).

Judy's
This cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 4/10: Brad Menedez. 4/12: Debbie Lesser. 4/13: Julie Reyburn. 4/14: Judy Kreston and David Lahm. 4/16: "That's My New York." 4/16: "Leer Mondays." 4/17: Brad Menendez in "Herbert's Happy Hour." • 169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).

Classical & Dance

Edited by Alicia Zuckerman

Ground Rules

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Classical Music

Holy Week Concerts
Performances abound, so check local churches and other venues. Here's a taste:

- **The Lark Quartet** performs Haydn's *Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross.* 4/10 at 6. • St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Amsterdam Ave. at 117th St. (212-854-0480); free.
- **St. Bartholomew's Choir and Orchestra** perform Fauré's *Requiem* and other French works. 4/10 at 7:30. • St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. (212-378-0248); $20–$40.
- **Common Ground,** the early-music ensemble, presents Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres.* 4/11 at 8. • Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Central Park West at 65th St. (212-749-2174); $15.
- **National Chorale** presents an all-Mozart concert featuring his *Requiem,* finished after his death by his student Franz Xavier Sussmayr. 4/13 at 8. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-333-5333); $21–$78.

Michael Kimmelman
Chief New York *Times* art critic gets his chops back in shape after fifteen years away from the ivories with works by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Chopin. 4/10 at 8. • Columbia University, Miller Theatre, 116th St. and Broadway (212-854-7799); $15.

"Sofia Gubaidulina 70th Birthday Tribute"
The Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York presents a two-evening tribute with performances by the Moscow String Quartet, an interview with Gubaidulina on 4/10 at 6, and a panel discussion on 4/11 at 6. Concerts are 4/10–4/11 at 8. • Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. (212-279-4200); $45.

"Familiar Strangers: The Gypsy Musical Heritage"
The Szászcsávás Band from Transylvania plays traditional Hungarian Romani village music. Then the Perspectives Ensemble performs classical music by Bartók, Liszt, and others. 4/12 at 8. • 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); $25.

Chorus pro Musica
Joins the Newton Symphony Orchestra in Xian Xinhai's *Yellow River Cantata,* written during the Sino-Japanese War and sung in Mandarin. Jeffrey Rink conducts both groups. 4/14 at 8. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $28–$55.

Peter Burns
The cellist who has been called "a new Casals" will play Rechtman's *Three Movements for Cello and Piano* dedicated to Leonard Bernstein, Bloch's *Baal Shem,* and works by Schubert and Brahms. 4/15 at 8:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $20.

Opera

Amato Opera
Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is the fifth production of the company's season. 4/13–5/6, weekends. Times vary. • Amato Opera, 319 Bowery (212-228-8200); $25.

The Metropolitan Opera
Alban Berg's *Lulu* has its season premiere on 4/9. Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* opens for a three-performance run on 4/14. *Parsifal* closes on 4/13. *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Plácido Domingo is also onstage. • Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); $25–$250.

New York City Opera
Eric Korngold's 1920 opera *De Tote Stadt* opens on 4/15. *Don Giovanni* has its last performance on 4/13. The week also includes *The Ballad of Baby Doe* and *La Bohème.* • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-870-5570); $25–$98.

"St. Matthew Passion"
Jonathan Miller's much-acclaimed, dressed-down staging of the Bach masterpiece. 4/10–4/11 and 4/13–4/14 at 7:30. • Brooklyn Academy of Music, Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St. (718-636-4100); $20–$65.

I Giullari di Piazza
Presents the world-music opera–Passion play *Stabat Mater: Donna de Paradiso.* 4/13 at 7:30. • Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (212-662-2133); $15–$20.

Dance

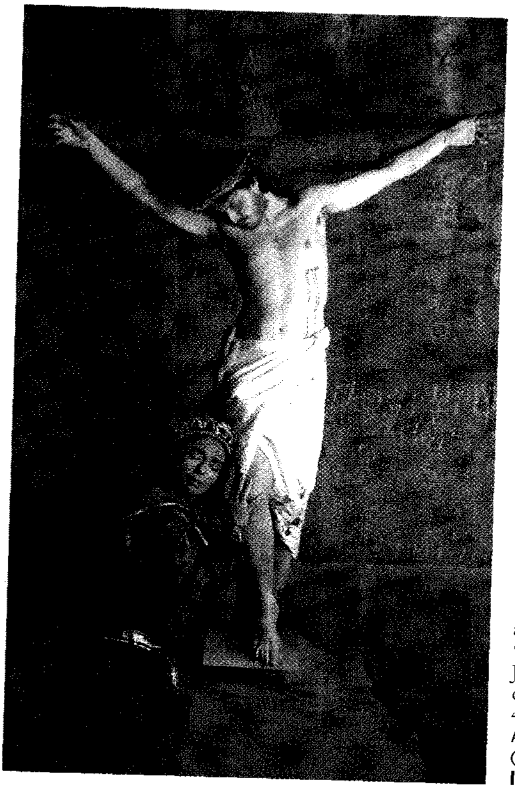
Ballet Tech
The spring season of Eliot Feld's company features visiting dancers Donlin Foreman, Buffy Miller, and Damian Woetzel; eighteen dances, including *Adieu, Coup de Couperin, Yo Shakespeare, The Gods Amused,* and *Paper Tiger.* Music varies from Debussy to Hugo Wolf to Leon Redbone. 4/9–4/22. Times vary. • The Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., nr. 18th St. (212-242-0800); $35.

Diversity of Dance XXIII
Earl Mosley's modern-dance company presents new works and company favorites. 4/13–4/14 at 8. • Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Square So. (212-995-9399); $5.

Moscow Festival Ballet
Presents *Giselle* led by Sergei Radchenko. 4/15 at 2. • Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Walt Whitman Theater, Brooklyn College, one block from Flatbush and Nostrand Aves. (718-951-4500); $25–$30.

Opening

Cross Talk

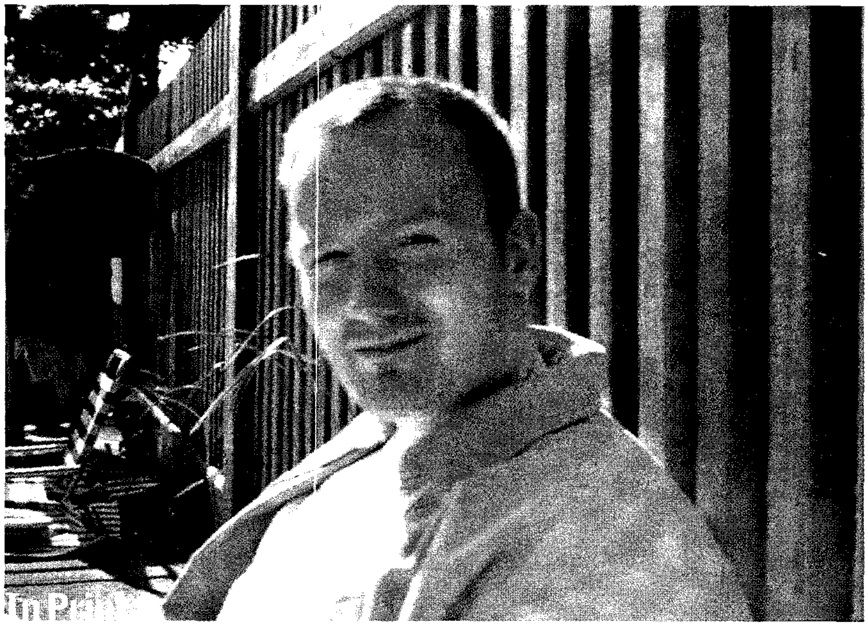


"It's not the Passion play that you think. We celebrate the sorrowing mother more than the death of Jesus," says Alessandra Belloni, co-founder of **I Giullari di Piazza** (the Jesters of the Square), the artists-in-residence at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine who perform *Stabat Mater: Donna de Paradiso* there on Friday. Belloni, who plays a tarantella-dancing, drum-playing Madonna, adapted the libretto from the thirteenth-century poems of Franciscan monk Jacopone da Todi. Although this production premiered in 1995, this is the first time it's being performed on Good Friday—a time, says Belloni, to acknowledge death but also resurrection. It's a nontraditional Catholic Passion play containing a lot of pre-Christian ritual, and though Da Todi's *Stabat Mater* is also the text of the Pergolesi and Rossini settings, Belloni says this production is closer musically to the time of the Resurrection. "It couldn't be classical," she says. "It had to be like Mediterranean folk music." The original score, by the group's co-founder John LaBarbera, combines Mediterranean, North African, and Middle Eastern melodies and rhythms. The production also incorporates Southern Italian and Native American sacrifice rituals based on Belloni's field research in anthropology, comparative religion, and ethnomusicology. As the Madonna, she spends a lot of the performance weeping. The first year, she even lost her voice trying to cry and sing simultaneously. "It's really important," she says, "because if I don't cry, nobody else does." *Other Easter-week highlights: The National Chorale performs Mozart's* Requiem; *St. Bartholomew's choir and orchestra perform Fauré's* Requiem; *the Lark Quartet performs Haydn's* Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross; *Common Ground performs Couperin's* Leçons de Ténèbres. *(See "Opera" and "Classical Music.")* A.Z.

Photograph by Frank Peters.

TheMix

Edited by Boris Kachka



You Talkin' to Me?

"If you're gonna have a crappy job and you want to be a writer," says **Michael Ledwidge**, "get a freight-elevator job." That's where, as a doorman on Fifth Avenue, Ledwidge wrote his first novel, *The Narrowback,* about a Manhattan doorman who becomes embroiled in a deadly plot. Ledwidge's next, more demanding job, fixing telephone cables beneath the city's manholes, forced him to write his second novel, *Bad Connection* (Pocket Books, $23.95), about a Manhattan phone splicer who becomes embroiled in a deadly plot—on the subway. Having since switched to the evening shift at Verizon, Ledwidge is now working on his third book (about a cop in similar circumstances) at home in the Bronx neighborhood of Kingsbridge, where the son of Irish immigrants has lived his entire life. Despite two successful books plugged by James Patterson, the second optioned by George Clooney's production company, Ledwidge has no plans to abandon Manhattan's underground. "I have three kids, and I'm married," he says. "Writing is not super-secure." Besides, he adds, "the phone company is a really good job. It's difficult, kind of complicated work, and I think it actually helps you to look at writing in the same kind of way, to think about the craft of writing—being disciplined about it." Though Ledwidge is finished with phone-related fiction, the job still has its perks for a crime writer who plans to set all his books in Manhattan's sometimes-metaphorical underbelly. "I couldn't have picked a better partner," he says of his current fellow splicer. "He's been down there for fifteen years, and he's really interested in the architecture of the city. It's like going on a different walking tour every day." Well, except for the occasional pot of molten lead. B.K.

Radio Highlights

Catrin Finch
The royal harpist to HRH the Prince of Wales (sort of the Welsh harpist laureate) performs on two programs this week and is interviewed by hosts Joan Hamburg and John Schaefer on WOR and WNYC, respectively. • 4/10 at 11 A.M.; WOR, 710 AM. 4/12 at 2 P.M., WNYC, 93.9 FM.

New Sounds With John Schaefer
Schaefer introduces "Fire at Keaton's Bar and Grill," a concert at the Arts at St. Ann's in Brooklyn Heights featuring Elvis Costello, Deborah Harry, and others. • 4/10 at 11 P.M. WNYC, 93.9 FM.

Studio 360
Host Kurt Andersen talks to novelists Susan and Eliza Minot about siblings as artistic subjects and collaborators. Also, graphic designer Michael Bierut critiques the 1040 form. • 4/14 at 10 A.M. WNYC, 93.9 FM.

"Bookends of the 20th Century"
Jeff Spurgeon hosts this year's season of "Artists in Radio," a program of chamber music and conversation. This episode is about groundbreaking music at the beginning and end of the century just past. • 4/14 at 1:30 P.M. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

James Patterson
The best-selling, movie-optioning author of *Roses Are Red* and *1st to Die* talks to the host of "The Lewis Burke Frumkes Show." • 4/15 at 8 P.M. WPAT, 930 AM.

Lectures and Panels

Howard Lamar
The Yale historian and author of *The New Encyclopedia of the American West* talks about Major Stephen H. Long, a forgotten explorer and mapmaker who led an 1819 expedition through the Rockies. • 4/10 at 6 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum, Humanities and Social Sciences Library, 455 Fifth Ave., at 42nd St. (212-930-0855); $10.

"One Long Singular Sensation"
Edward Rubin, longtime writer and "performance lecturer," delivers an illustrated talk-performance on London's contemporary-art world, from Frances Bacon to Damien Hirst—covering Charles Saatchi's collection, the Tate Modern, and several newer trends. • 4/10 at 7 P.M. Cooper Union Great Hall, Foundation Building, 7 E. 7th St. (212-279-4200); free.

Cinéma-vérité
Filmmakers Jon Alpert, Robert Drew, Rory Kennedy, Brett Morgen, and Donn Pennebaker talk about the form of raw documentary that flourished in the sixties and has been evolving ever since. • 4/10 at 7:30 P.M. Museum of Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (212-621-6600); $10.

Michael Kimmelman
The *Times* chief art critic, whose article on returning to the concert stage is the basis for his forthcoming book *Returning to the Piano,* performs and discusses his work. • 4/10 at 8 P.M. Columbia University's Miller Theatre, 116th St. and Broadway (212-854-7799); $15.

"Freud & Women: No Longer 'The Dark Continent' "
Psychoanalyst Gail Saltz moderates a talk on the progress made in female psychology since Freud. Participants include Harvard professor Carol Gilligan, Anna Freud biographer Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, and psychoanalyst Rosemary Balsam. • 4/10 at 8 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); $20.

"Greece in Poetry: Past and Present"
Translators Peter Constantine and Thanassis Hatzopoulos join literature professors from Princeton and Dartmouth to talk about Greek poetry. • 4/11 at 6:30 P.M. The Onassis Cultural Center, Olympic Tower, 645 Fifth Ave., at 51st St. (212-486-4448); free.

"John Wilkes Booth and George Alford Townsend"
Dr. Terry Alford lectures on the assassination of Lincoln and on the journalist who published the first major book on the fatal shooting. The talk follows cocktails and dinner. • 4/12, 5:30 P.M. cocktails, 6:30 P.M. dinner, 7:30 P.M. lecture. Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St. (973-383-9304); $24 all-inclusive.

Thomas Jefferson's Birthday
The Merchant's House celebrates with a slide lecture by landscape architect Charles Stick entitled "Thomas Jefferson and the American Landscape," followed by a dinner of Jefferson's favorite foods and wine. • 4/12 at 6:30 P.M., dinner 7:30 P.M. Merchant's House Museum, 29 E. 4th St. (212-777-1089); $40.

"Tibetan Dispatches"
At a two-day conference at NYU, journalists discuss the challenges of reporting about Tibet, with a Thursday keynote speech by Orville Schell followed by two Friday panels titled "Beyond Shangri-la" and "Wrighting Rights." • Keynote: 4/12 at 6:30 P.M. Ben Snow Room, 12th floor, Bobst Library, 70 Washington Sq. South. Panels: 4/13, 10 A.M.-12:30 P.M. and 2-4 P.M.. Dean's Conference Room, Tisch School of the Arts, 721 Broadway, 12th floor (212-998-3759); free, limited seating.

Yoga Master Geeta S. Iyengar
The preeminent woman in world yoga and practi-

Photograph by Mary Ledwidge.

tioner of Ayurvedic medicine talks about "How Yoga Evolves Mankind." • 4/14 at 4 P.M. New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th St. (212-691-9642); $25.

The Written Word

"Wishes in Black & White"
Author Eileen Williams Sabry and photographer Roya Movafegh, the creators of the interview-based book on American race relations, discuss it and sign copies. • 4/9 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (212-614-7094); free.

In Print

A Moving Story

Joseph Berger's madeleine was a seeded roll he began eating several years ago at an editorial meeting of the New York *Times*, where he works as the deputy education editor. The associated memories, newly published in **Displaced Persons** (Scribner, $26), were of a hardscrabble New York childhood spent as one of 140,000 Jewish refugees from German displaced-persons camps, where they were gathered at the end of the war. Some had survived concentration camps; many others, from Poland and nearby territories, like Berger's parents, avoided the Holocaust only because they were exiled to Siberia by the invading Soviets. Berger tells his parents' stories—and others too often passed over in Holocaust histories—but focuses on their American life as well as his own guilt-ridden transition from poor Bronx immigrant to Establishment Larchmont intellectual.

DISPLACED PERSONS
GROWING UP AMERICAN AFTER THE HOLOCAUST
Joseph Berger

"Selected Shorts"
Sherman Alexie hosts this installment, with Hector Elizondo, Peter Gerety, and Deborah Rush reading short stories from Simon Ortiz, Chris Offutt, and Alice Elliott Dark. • 4/11 at 6:30 P.M. Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (212-864-5400); $18.

Tribute to Stanley Kunitz
The poet laureate himself is joined by nearly every famous English-language poet, to honor his life and work. Speakers include Galway Kinnell, Yusef Komunyakaa, Sharon Olds, and Robert Pinsky. • 4/11 at 8 P.M. Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-274-0343, ext. 10); $10–$15.

Dalton Conley
The NYU sociologist and author of the memoir *Honky* reads in the final installment of the library's series "Life in Black and White: Reflections on Race in America." • 4/12 at 6:30 P.M. Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch, Grand Army Plaza (718-230-2100); free.

Community Word Project
Brooklyn-based poet and NYU professor Quaraysh Ali Lansana reads along with National Poetry Slam champion Patricia Smith. They also read collaborative poems from the youth-based program. • 4/12 at 7 P.M. Housing Works, 126 Crosby St. (212-334-3324); free.

John Montague
The well-known poet reads from his latest collection, *Smashing the Piano*. • 4/12 at 7 P.M. Glucksman Ireland House, One Washington Mews (212-998-3950); $5.

Amy Borkowsky
The comic and author of *Amy's Answering Machine: Messages From Mom* reads from her book and signs copies. • 4/12 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 240 E. 86th St. (212-794-1962); free.

Seamus Heaney
The Nobel laureate delivers a reading and lecture on the art of translation, debuting the Poets House's new series on literary translation. • 4/13 at 7 P.M. NYU Main Building, 24 Waverly Pl., Rm. 703 (212-431-7920); $5.

Marie Howe and Michael Klein
Poet Howe and memoirist Klein (co-editors of *In the Company of My Solitude: American Writing From the AIDS Pandemic*) read from their work and discuss the lecture's theme, "Poetry, Memory and Memoir." • 4/14 at 2 P.M. Mid-Manhattan Branch Library, 455 Fifth Ave., at 40th St. (212-340-0833); free.

David Lida and Jaime Clarke
At KGB's Sunday fiction series, Lida reads from his story collection about Mexico, *Travel Advisory*, Clarke from his debut novel, *We're So Famous*. • 4/15 at 7 P.M. KGB Bar, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Pat Barker
The Booker Prize–winning author of *Border Crossing* first talks to critic Michael Gorra, then reads from her new novel along with fellow English writer Hilary Mantel. • 4/16, talk 6 P.M., reading 8 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); free.

Malika Oufkir
The Moroccan princess who dug out of a desert jail with her hands talks about her new memoir, *Stolen Lives*, and signs copies. • 4/16 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Special Events

Tours

Brooklyn Bridge Talk and Walk
A tour of the bridge is accompanied by a lecture on how the Roebling family went about building the great work. • 4/14 at 1 P.M. Meet inside Blimpie's at 38 Park Row (888-377-4455); $12.

Easter Parade Tour
Michael Kaback leads a walking tour through midtown to the annual Easter Parade, talking about its origins as a display of new spring fashions 150 years ago. • 4/15, 9:30 A.M. to noon. Meet at Grand Central Terminal, Park Avenue at 42nd St. (212-370-4124); $15.

Radical Jews
An Easter Sunday Lower East Side tour by Bruce Kayton, founder of Radical Walking Tours, begins with the massive immigrations and runs through the exploits of big lefties like the Rosenbergs, Abraham Cahan, and Rose Pastor Stokes. • 4/15 at 1 P.M. Meet across from the old Jewish Daily Forward Building at 175 East Broadway (718-492-0069); $10.

Benefits

Authors Guild Benefit
Roger Straus, the founder and CEO of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, is the honoree at the ninth annual dinner (benefiting the Authors Guild Foundation), hosted by Calvin Trillin and Scott Turow. Everyone from Frank McCourt to Judy Blume should be attending. • 4/9, 6:30 P.M. cocktails, 7:30 P.M. dinner and program. The Metropolitan Club, 1 E. 60th St. (212-594-7931); $500–$1,000.

"A Night of Storyville"
Stories at the Moth, an eclectic storytelling series, hosts a benefit co-chaired by Ethan Hawke and Ann Magnuson and co-hosted by George Plimpton and Buck Henry which includes cocktails, a silent auction, food, music, and, of course, stories. Philip Gourevitch, Michaela Murphy, Mira Nair, and Tony Hendra are the tellers. • 4/10, 6:30 P.M. VIP cocktails, 7:30 P.M. stories. Angel Orensanz Foundation, 172 Norfolk St. (212-292-0907); $350 with cocktails, $125 general admission.

Dudley Moore Birthday Benefit
A celebrity-packed tribute and dinner, featuring appearances by Lauren Bacall, Chevy Chase, Tony Randall, Mary Tyler Moore, Barbara Walters, and others, benefits two of Moore's favorite nonprofits, Music for All Seasons and the Dudley Moore Research Fund for Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. • 4/16 at 7 P.M. Performance at Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St.; cocktail, dinner, and auction, Essex House, 160 Central Park South (212-247-7800); $35–$150 tribute, $250–$1,000 all-inclusive.

Exhibits

"¡Propaganda! Cuban Political and Film Posters"
Those two categories may sum up the majority of advertising in the tightly controlled Communist nation—and perhaps, if this show of 100 silk-screened works is well received, the island's own answer to ubiquitous Soviet kitsch. • 4/12–6/29. American Institute of Graphic Arts, 164 Fifth Ave., at 22nd St. (212-807-1990); free.

Park Views
The Parks Department exhibits 24 artists' takes on New York City parkland, from well-known parks and playgrounds to unknown nooks and lonely patches of green known as Greenstreets. • 4/12–5/11, Mon.– Fri. 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Arsenal Building, third fl., 830 Fifth Ave., at 64th St.; free.

Event

New York International Automobile Show
The show may be about as old as the automobile, but this season's models are brand-new, from smaller SUVs and high-tech safety to retro wagons and coupes. Not to worry, manly men: There's a special motor-sports exhibit too, with NASCAR and, uh, all the others. • 4/13,

Game Week

HOME AWAY ▨

	Mon: 4/9	Tues: 4/10	Weds: 4/11	Thur: 4/12	Fri: 4/13	Sat: 4/14	Sun: 4/15
DEVILS			NHL PLAYOFFS SCHEDULE TBA				
METS	ATL WPIX 1:10 P.M.		ATL FSNY 6:30 P.M.	ATL FSNY 6:30 P.M.	CIN FNSY 7:10 P.M.	CIN WPIX 1:10 P.M.	CIN WPIX 1:10 P.M.
YANKEES	▨ KC MSG 8:05 P.M.	▨ KC MSG 8:05 P.M.	▨ KC MSG 2:05 P.M.		▨ BOS FOX 6:05 P.M.	▨ BOS FOX 1:05 P.M.	▨ BOS FOX 1:05 P.M.
KNICKS	CHA MSG 7:30 P.M.		▨ IND MSG 8 P.M.		ATL MSG 7:30 P.M.		▨ PHI MSG 8 P.M.
NETS				▨ CHA FSNY 7:30 P.M.	CLE FSNY 7:30 P.M.		▨ BOS NBC 12:30 P.M.

Photograph by Joe Scafuro.

MENDELSOHN *Continued from page 71*

Particularly good are his evocations of the Sinai desert, with its surprising cold and the eerie, endless noise of the sand. And he has a journalist's knack for the zippy gloss. His description of the organization of the Ancient Near East's Fertile Crescent, with Egypt and Mesopotamia on either end and a "bunch of smaller nations in between, as structured like a modern American shopping mall—with two anchor stores on either end linked by a string of smaller, more vulnerable stores"—is vividly apt.

The problem with *Walking the Bible* is that Feiler has neither the scholarly equipment nor the narrative skills to make the leap from the real journey to the metaphorical one, from travel to God. Feiler loves amusing biblical trivia—I'll bet you didn't know that the animals on Noah's ark would have produced 800 tons of manure by the end of the trip—but because he relies entirely on experts for his treatment of serious historical and theological matters, much of his book has the predigested, third-hand feel, to say nothing of the style ("as historian Moshe Pearlman wrote . . . "), of the Milestones section of *Time* magazine. One sure sign that Feiler is in over his head is the relentless shtick. His frequent indulgence in jokiness yields, at best, marginal results (glyphs carved into a stone are "perhaps an eye chart") and, at worst, glib misrepresentations of complicated religious and historical phenomena ("The world's first pulp novels were carved on the walls of Egypt's temples.") And, as in that old grade-school game called telephone, the author's total reliance on others for his information leads him to get a lot of things just plain wrong. *Genesis* isn't from the Greek word *geneseosis;* it is, unsurprisingly, from the Greek word *genesis.* (There is no Greek word *geneseosis.*)

None of this would matter if Feiler had succeeded in showing you the mechanics of how the "places themselves" ultimately moved him "closer to the stories." Writers who write compellingly about either God or travel—Saint Augustine, say, or Jan Morris—are, first and foremost, good writers; Feiler, with his nervous dependence on canned, Lifetime-television insights ("some journeys we choose, some journeys choose us") just isn't up to the job. I sometimes got the feeling that the author hoped that the sheer amount of material would persuade you. Every chapter has a similarly deadening pattern: Feiler goes somewhere, asks questions, meets an adorably eccentric Israeli archaeologist, digresses about pyramid-building or camel-riding, paraphrases the biblical text that takes place there, and finally has a little moment of insight in which he feels a connection to the land and its stories. But from his first mini-revelation after seeing Mount Ararat in Turkey, when "some ill-defined part" of him "suddenly found a place where it felt comfortable," to his concluding pages, in which his "identity, the land, time, God—came together in a flash," there's nothing that compels you to make the connection yourself. Like the authors of those pamphlets you get handed on the downtown No. 1 train, he wants you to take the metaphorical part of the author's journey completely on faith.

Faith, of course, is fine, but if you had faith to begin with, you might not have picked up *Walking the Bible.* By the end of his book, Feiler is indulging in the same kind of circular obscurities that repel, rather than seduce, skeptics. After 400 pages, "The Bible lives because it never dies" is not the kind of climactic insight you're hoping for. Whatever journey you choose—or chooses you?—*Walking the Bible* is unlikely to be the choice of readers looking for a really good book about the Good Book.

THE BIBLE THAT ACCOMPANIED FEILER AS HE schlepped around the Holy Land was in English; how it got to be that way is the subject of Benson Bobrick's engrossing tale. You don't need to be religious to marvel at the beauty of the King James Version: What Bobrick grippingly reminds you of here is that bloody political, theological, and intellectual crises marked the translation of the Bible into English. (William Tyndale was executed as a heretic for giving the people a Bible they could actually understand.) There's plenty of detail here, from mini-bios of Henry VIII's deliciously corrupt Cardinal Wolsey, the torture-happy Saint Thomas More, and Martin Luther to minute yet fascinating comparisons of translational word choices. (Thank God we didn't end up with "God is my shepherd, therefore I can lose nothing.") But the biographical, historical, and lexicographical trees never get in the way of the argumentative forest: Bobrick's larger point is that giving people the chance to read and interpret the Bible on their own was a first step toward the Glorious Revolution. Tendentious, perhaps, but this fast-paced nonfiction narrative is so engaging that it's likely to make a believer of any reader. ■

1–8 P.M.; 4/14–4/22, Mon. through Sat. 11 A.M. to 10:30 P.M., Sun. 10 A.M. to 7 P.M. Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, Eleventh Ave. and 34th St. (800-282-3336); $9.

Sports

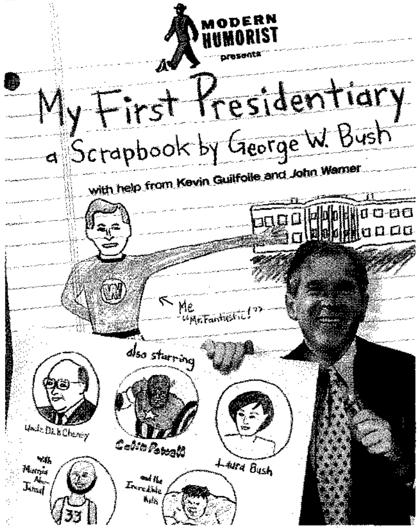
Middleweight Championship Series
Bernard Hopkins and Keith Holmes battle it out in the Theatre at Madison Square Garden; the winner will face either Felix Trinidad or William Joppy (who'll fight here May 12) for the undisputed championship September 15 in the Garden. • 4/14 at 6:30 P.M. (more info. at www.thegarden.com); $25–$300.

Badminton Tournament
The Parks Department hosts this birdie battle, including singles and doubles competitions for ages 16 and up. • 4/14 at 9:30 A.M. Alfred W. Smith Recreation Center, 80 Catherine St. (212-285-0300); free.

In Print

Marketing Strategery

Though *Saturday Night Live* and the late-night talk shows seem to have had their fill of a tongue-twisted, unseasoned White House resident, the upstarts have only begun to salivate over the comic potential. The *South Park* kids debuted their own crude take, **That's My Bush!**—you were expecting *The West Wing*?—just last week (Comedy Central, Wednesdays at 10:30 P.M.). And Modern Humorist, a decidedly Bush-obsessed Website à la *The Onion,* is just releasing a hard copy of the workbook **My First Presidentiary** (Three Rivers Press, $9.95)—the idea being that Dubya is a really smart 9-year-old rather than a full-grown moron. Should make us feel better about that whole global-warming thing.



Kids

Edited by Susan Avery

Children's Events

Elementary Reading

In his first novel for kids, author Michael Laser nails the voice of a New Yorker in the sixth-grade, circa 1963. The coming-of-age tome, *6-321* (Atheneum), reads like the boy version of Judy Blume's *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.* • At bookstores.

Musical Data

Composing music is kids' play. Meet composer Morton Subotnick as he demonstrates his interactive computer music-making for youngsters. Transforming kids into both composers and conductors through simple movements with the mouse, Subotnick will offer up his popular CD-ROMs *Making Music, Making More Music,* and his new work, *Gestures: It Begins With Color.* • 4/14 at 1 P.M.; The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793); $10, $5 for kids.

This Is for Keeps

CineKids, the Guggenheim Museum's new children's-film series, offers up notions about life through the use of thematic film shorts. Audience discussion follows the screening. On this week's agenda is a look at collecting and classifying, with screenings of the following films: *The Sound Collector, Picture Day,* and *Memory Museum,* where students transform their school into an exhibit. • 4/14 at noon; at the museum's Peter B. Lewis Theater, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-423-3587); $5 for one child and one adult, $5 for each additional adult.

Hop on Over

The fifty-fifth Easter Eggstravaganza at Central Park is gearing up. Join in on the egg hunt and roll race. Build your own holiday basket and say hello to the bunnies at the petting zoo. Borrow a free pair of Rollerblades and zoom over to the puppet-show and face-painting area. Bandshell performances by the casts of *A Class Act, Beauty and the Beast,* and Cirque du Soleil. • 4/14 from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M.; enter the park at 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (888-NY-PARKS); free.

Life's Rough

Her teacher hates her, her older sister is a pain, and her dad just lost his job. Beverly Cleary's tales of Ramona Quimby, staged by Theatreworks/USA, teach kids that life's bumps in the road are easier to take with the help of loved ones. • 4/17 and 4/18 at 10:15 A.M. and noon; Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, one block from the junction of Flatbush and Nostrand Aves. (718-951-4600, ext. 25); $4.

Eloise Etiquette

Elbows on the table and soup slurping are not allowed. The Plaza Hotel offers a a children's-etiquette class that includes such lessons as creating a proper place setting and how to handle difficult foods (no, not with your hands). A certified protocol instructor (is there such a thing?) will conduct the class. • 4/14 at noon; White and Gold Room, Fifth Ave. and Central Park South (212-546-5495); $35, includes lunch.

City Rhythms

A multimedia exhibit of works inspired by the energy, motion, and architecture of a city environment includes pieces from 24 artists from around the U.S. Video, sculpture, painting, photography, and ceramics are all part of the exhibition. • Through 4/14; Pelham Art Center, 155 Fifth Ave., Pelham (914-738-2525); free.

Dance With Me

Kids Dance, a group whose members range in age from 11 to teenage and are all students of Eliot Feld's Ballet Tech School, will entertain the masses this spring with a selection of upbeat, fun numbers. The program includes *Apple Pie*'s toe-tapping bluegrass music; *Meshugana Dance,* a Klezmer number; *Joggers,* a piece that shows how clever one can be with a basic movement; and *In Full Swing.* • 4/14, 21 at 2 P.M.; Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $15-$25.

Cinderella

New York Theatre Ballet's annual performance of *Cinderella* is winnowed down to one hour to keep the kids from getting antsy. Look for the whimsical dancing clock and Cinderella as a magical quick-change artist when she goes from rags to haute couture in time for the ball. • Through 4/15; Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160); $25, $20 kids 12 and younger.

Gumby's Back

Step into the magical world of children's books when "Gumby's World: Adventures Into Books" comes to the Brooklyn Children's Museum. Kids can enter a cave to learn about fossils and ancient symbols of communication. Or how about climbing aboard a spaceship and mapping out a voyage? At the Creation Station, learn how books are made and author one of your own. • Through 6/29; 145 Brooklyn Ave. (718-735-4400); $4.

In Print

Sixth Sense

Back when there was uniformity to the New York City school system—elementary school went from kindergarten through sixth grade; junior high was seventh, eighth, and ninth; high school was tenth through twelfth—there was something extraordinary about being a sixth-grader. For starters, you were the biggest kid in the school, a situation that brought its own brand of giddy omnipotence, especially when the younger kids kowtowed. But because sixth-graders weren't yet petrified about the mythic "permanent record," there were still childlike concerns about how to get through an average day. "I was so terrified all the time of the teachers yelling," recalls Michael Laser, author of **6-321** (Atheneum, $16.00), his first children's novel. In 1996, Laser dusted off his 30-year-old class picture from P.S. 186 in Queens (pictured; Laser is in the top row, third from left) and began to write down everything he remembered. The roman-à-clef follows a year in the life of Marc Chaikin, a mediocre student from Glen Oaks who falls in love, watches his family's cocoon break apart, meets that first teacher who encourages him, and comes a breath away from getting his butt kicked by the JDs in the dumb class. "It's about moments that seem so penetrating and true," says the author from his suburban Jersey home. "It doesn't demand any suspension of disbelief." Think of it as the anti–Harry Potter book; no magic, no wild adventures, no school flying competitions. Just a slice of New York Jewish life with minimal melodrama. Even better than Assembly Day. S.A.

P.S. 186 Q
6-322
MARCH 66

Photograph courtesy of Michael Laser.

April 16, 2001—VOL. 34, NO. 15. Periodicals postage paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices. *New York* Magazine (ISSN #0028-7369) is published weekly (except for combined issues the last week of June and the first week of July, the last week of August and the first week of September, and the last two weeks of December) by Primedia Magazines Inc., 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999. Editorial and business offices: 212-508-0700. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to New York, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 80322-4661. Subscription rates in the U.S. and possessions: 50 issues, $29.90. For subscription assistance, write Joseph Oliver, New York Magazine, Subscription Department, Box 54661, Boulder, Colorado 80322-4661. Or call 800-678-0900 or 212-447-4749. Printed in the U.S.A.

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Ask LaLa

How will the downturn in Wall Street affect the real estate market?

The real estate market in New York tends to be more stable than the various stock market indicators. Many buyers are salaried doctors, attorneys, and CEOs with long term investments outside of Wall Street. Giuliani's Quality of Life Campaign has crime at a low point, tourism up, and construction spreading all over the city in the past 5-6 years. New York is a safe and attractive metropolitan city. In many ways New York functions as a country within itself, and while nationwide we may be on the brink of recession, in New York things are looking bright.

New York real estate has a particular glow. The change in the city's image means a whole realm of short and long-term catering to high class style. Foreigners from out of state and abroad know where to find their panoramic river views, white glove service, and five thousand square foot lofts. Luxury living is at its best.

There is a constant lack of supply on the Manhattan Island. The supply of condominiums is always below the demand. While condominiums are the most desirable type of properties, they are also only 20% of the buildings in the city.

When other markets become more volatile, the real estate market becomes more attractive. There is a shift from stocks and bonds to real property investments. With the cut in interest rates, mortgage loans are offered at better deals than ever, and buyers are eager to invest now.

As Barbara Corcoran, one of the leading real estate market specialists, comments: "With the constant lack of supply in New York, the market will always be tight. With the Fed cutting interest rates, smart buyers will get their financing in place and act quickly and decisively when they find their dream home."

LaLa Wang is CEO of New York City based MLX.com, a residential real estate community and technology company connecting consumers and professionals. For more expert advice or to ask a question, email LaLa at asklala@mlx.com

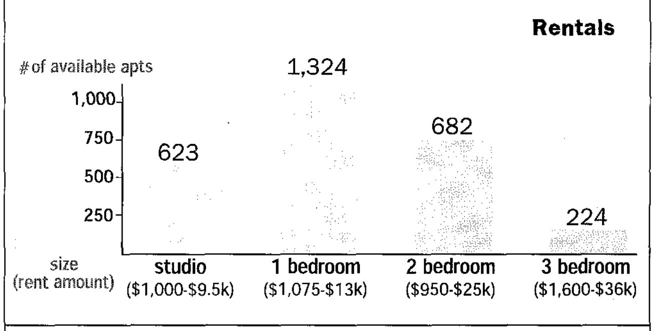
Broker of The Week

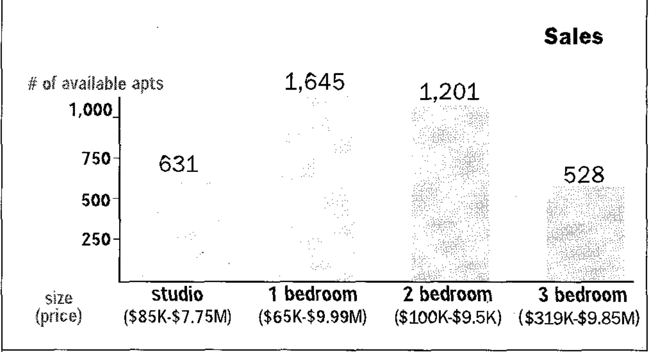
Toni D. Haber
Senior Vice President, Douglas Elliman

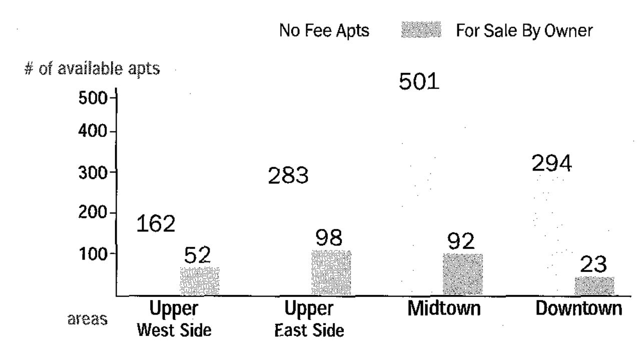
A consistent top producer for Douglas Elliman, Toni Haber has been a real estate broker for 19 years, starting just after graduating from the University of Maryland with a marketing degree. Marketing is what successful real estate is all about, says Toni, who has just been promoted to Senior Vice President at Douglas Elliman. "In good times or bad, there is no safer harbor for long term growth than New York's real estate market," she tells her clients. "Whether beating back the bears or riding with the bulls, there are always opportunities in New York real estate." Always the perfectionist, Toni makes her own scrupulous photographs of the exclusive residential properties she represents, armed with a digital camera and desktop printer. "If I've learned one thing over the years, we don't just sell homes, we help people to dream their dreams - and realize them," she says. When she isn't working she's working out. She is passionate about downhill skiing, weight trains with a personal trainer, and can be seen running in Central Park (and in the occasional marathon).

Contact Toni Haber at (212) 769-9851 or thaber@elliman.com.

MLX Market Watch







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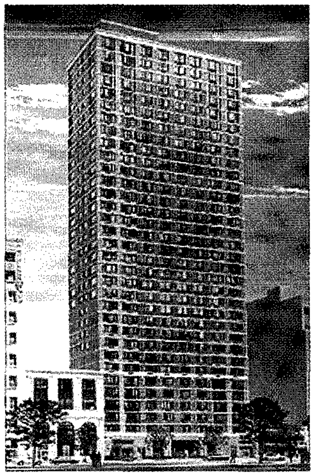

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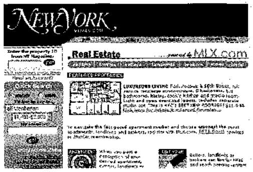

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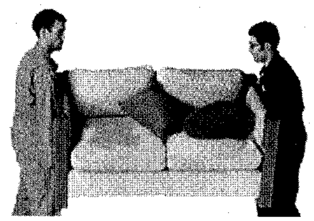

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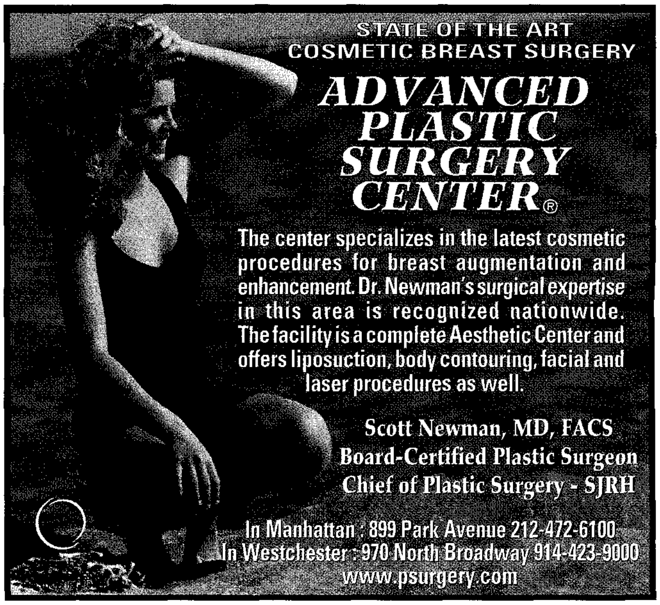

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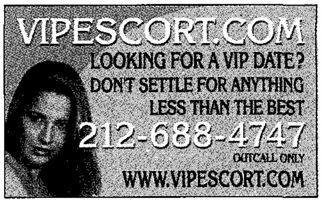
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Gay, Good-Looking, In-Shape—60, gentleman, accomplished, stylish, affluent, 5'11", 175 lbs - interested in arts, travel, gardens, country/city life style. Seeks sensitive, bright, creative younger counterpart for serious exclusive relationship. Photo essential. 7449 ✉

Absolutely Stunning—And so much more. Long-legged, slender, graceful, divorced white female, 49. Accomplished entrepreneur. Vivacious, generous, candid, real. Bountiful humor, sure to make you laugh. Penetrating green eyes. Gravitates to fun - vacations, good theater, blockbuster exhibitions, US Open, spa weekends, Mount Desert Island, off-beaten-track adventures. Game for most things. Plays tennis, sails. Values authenticity. Seeks active/physical, nonsmoking, 5'9"-plus, attractive man...a "doer" - curious mind, interested in life, 45-55. Njmaine@aol.com 7417 ✉☎

High-Spirited Brunette—Sensitive and sensual, with terrific looks and blue eyes, standing 5'7", slim and very fit, is interested in meeting a single man between the ages of 45 and 58. You enjoy a successful life, as I do, are attractive, playful and fit. You have a kind heart, are secure with yourself and ready to share great times with someone special, like me! 7454 ✉☎

Swim The Moat—To a princess looking for her prince this side of the Hudson. Pretty, intelligent, witty. 5'2", slender. No toad! I love great food, quiet walks, conversation, movies, the symphony, Rome, theater, mysteries, sunsets, Paris, inventing, dogs and family - all the good stuff! Looking for a man with great genes. Intelligent, attractive, funny and strong. A friend and ally who loves to be kissed. 50 years plus. Note/photo please. 7408✉☎

I Belong On A Milk Carton—Because I am "missing" someone special to enjoy life with. Male lawyer, 47, Jewish, seeks female, 30-45, for relationship. 7429✉☎

Male Ex-Jesuit—Seeks educated, slim, natural blond, 25-30. Photo. 7402 ✉☎

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Get Out Of The Rat Race—Come join me in my mountaintop log home. White male, nonsmoker, 59, looks 50, 6'4", in search of tall, slender, nonsmoking, naturally pretty, outdoorsy lady to join me and enjoy the easy life in Sullivan County. Photo and note. 7389 ✉☎

Good-Looking, Down-To-Earth—Successful, Ivy-educated physician, 43, seeks a beautiful, educated and stable female, 29-35, who enjoys reading, travel and sports. Photo, please. 7448 ✉

A Younger Sigourney Weaver—With Grace Kelly-type sexiness. Slim, athletic body, long brown curls, ambitious, PhD, witty, with playful side and a long fuse. Single woman, 39. Exudes confidence, grace and spirited elegance. Romantic, passionate, not snobby. Loves trying new wines/restaurants - four-star to great hamburgers. Favorites: Paris anytime, Taj Mahal at night, Bali, NY Times crosswords, tennis, horseback riding, Bach, Bridgehampton, my Boxster. Would love to write suspense best-seller a la John Grisham. Seeking articulate, educated, successful, fit (not fanatic) man, 35-49, some sense of ironic humor. Petrus220@hotmail.com 7415 ✉☎

Honest, Sincere—Divorced Jewish male (NJ), attorney, 52, 5'10", handsome, nonsmoker, caring and considerate. Enjoy theater, movies, concerts, travel, volunteer activities. In search of nice, pretty, compatible woman (37-47). Photo/note. 7452✉☎

Passionate, Intelligent—50-plus chanteuse seeks affectionate risk-taker with pizazz, to trip the cultural lights fantastic. No flash-in-the-pans, please. 7379 ✉☎

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This Young 60ish, Jewish—Financially successful guy is looking for an attractive, warm, sensual, upbeat lady. He enjoys fine dining, travel, theater and sports. He knows how to love and be loved. I am ready. Note and photo a must. 7458 ✉

Vibrant, Attractive Female Exec—With eyes of blue and heart of gold... slender, articulate, fun, Jewish, single, 41, 5'4". Seeks a warm, accomplished, professional Jewish male with integrity, 40-50, to share now-forever. 7437 ✉☎

Greek Single Male—55, 5'9", living in Greece, never-married, seeking an honest blond lady for marriage and family. Send photo/telephone: 7424 ✉

Big, Beautiful, Attractive—Single white female, 34, desires a man who admires curves. If you are intelligent, charming and have great wit, let's banter. 7398✉☎

Male DDS—Slim, 5'7", 65, likes arts, etc. Seeks slim, attractive woman with a good sense of humor. Photo. 7428 ✉☎

Executive, 55—Seeks buxom, full-figured female, 35-55, with great personality. Describe yourself and interests. Prefer you live in NJ. 7380✉☎

Stunning Female Manhattanite—Sophisticated, single, Jewish, smart, sexy, glamorous, cultured, eye-catching, successful businesswoman (34), looking for her equal. I am a very happy person, very secure with myself and very comfortable in my own skin. You should be the same - looking to laugh, talk, travel, share interests and enjoy all of what life has to offer for a lifetime. Note/recent photo/phone a must. 7364 ✉☎

April Days Can Bring Flowers—If you're a bright, affectionate, youthful-looking, soft-spoken, northern Jersey or NYC female, 40-50, who enjoys movies, Broadway, travel, romancing. Successful, easygoing professional guy, a young 55, awaits your recent photo/note. 7440✉☎

34, Handsome, 6', Athletic—Successful, caring and funny entrepreneur from NJ, looking for pretty, intelligent and fit counterpart. Avid tennis player who loves the outdoors, sports, kids and most anything with the right company. Note with photo. 7457 ✉

Adorable Jewish Female, 37—Classy, warm, attractive, playful, romantic, Jewish-minded/kosher professional, nursing supervisor - seeks a romantic, warm, witty, Jewish-minded professional male to share life's dreams together. 7409 ✉☎

Attractive, Sophisticated—Adventurous widow seeks male, 50-60, with sense of humor and zest for life. 7451 ✉☎

Attractive Lady Seeking Nice Guy—Tall, blue-eyed blond seeking her soul mate. Photo/phone. 7465 ✉☎

Gay, Cultured, Evolved Man—60-year-old businessman, college instructor and writer, looking for a long-term relationship. Sense of humor, honesty and monogamy are musts. Be between 35-50. Note and photo essential. 7467 ✉

One-Of-A-Kind—Petite, pretty French and Italian female seeks male, 45-55. Photo a must. 7431 ✉☎

South FL Bound—Tall, very handsome, Jewish, athletic male, financially secure, 53, with a sense of humor, seeks sophisticated woman, 37-44, with similar qualities. 7423 ✉☎

Loving, Supportive, Sincere Male, 64—PhD, seeks sweet, educated, artistic lady. Travel, arts, fun. Photo, please. 7323 ✉

Adventurous Explorer's Spirit—Appealingly attractive, good-hearted brunette. Passionate, positive, personable. Fit, 5'8", divorced. TV producer turned financial professional, occasional caterer with real travel bug - shines at Trivial Pursuit geography questions. Grew up sailing, loves fishing. Known for good sense of humor and fun. Loves sporting events (basketball, US Open), Tanglewood, Block Island, blue herons, gardening, dogs, sailing Mediterranean, Bruges, good books. Seeks caring, verbal, financially sound professional man, 46-60, 5'9" plus. Kodiak11@hotmail.com 7447 ✉☎

Pretty, Slim Female—Wants to share her passion for travel (Dutch treat) with 50ish-60ish male friend/lover. Note and photo, please. 7464 ✉

Sophisticated, Shapely, Gentle—Terrific athlete, excellent physical shape, very attractive, well-educated, cultured, well-traveled, stylish, tall Jewish lady - seeking kind, cosmopolitan, successful gentleman, 45-57. 4.0 tennis player/avid skier is a plus. Honesty/sincerity/kindness is your real advantage. 7442✉☎

Take A Chance—Spend an evening with a vibrant, fun-loving, cultured woman who will hope to make your heart sing and your eyes shine. She seeks a tall, intelligent, secure, romantic man, 58-65, to share life's adventures and laugh at its absurdities. Photo and note or: eyeful2002@yahoo.com 7410 ✉☎

Handsome, Wealthy, Worldly—Older gentleman seeks tall, elegant, beautiful woman, preferably European, 30s-40s, for relationship. Picture and letter necessary. 7434 ✉

Warm, Friendly Italian—Interested in starting a family. Seeks bright, elegant Catholic woman, 28-38. I'm 44, 5'10", 165 lbs, handsome, salt/pepper. Manager in city government. Enjoy conversation, dining, music, books, sports and travel. Note/photo/phone, please. 7397 ✉☎

Real Mensch, Tired Of Games—45, divorced, childless Westchester physician, 5'10", in good shape, full head of hair, ready now for love, marriage and children. Seeks Jewish female, 35-40, who is as seriously family-minded as I. Note/photo preferred. 7455 ✉ ☎

Eye-Catching, Slender Good Looks—Tall, striking blond, 40-something, great sense of style, long legs, real presence. Upscale, sophisticated and down-to-earth. No time for pretension. Successful and fun Wall Street professional - makes television appearances. Independent, spirited, appealing style. Favorites: St. Barts, the Sopranos, white Burgundies, off-Broadway, hiking France, running in Central Park. Seeking educated, attractive man - tall, active, successful professional, 46-58, who can laugh, doesn't take himself too seriously. norsk.turid@verizon.net 7416 ✉☎

Petite Blond—Jewish, 30s, in fashion, looking for mega-successful CEO type for marriage - Jewish, fit and at least 5'10", must be successful and fun-loving - for world travel, Hamptons and romantic dinners...and happily ever after. Photo a must. 7441 ✉☎

Handsome, Single White Gentleman—(JD, 37, 5'11", 165, gentile) seeks smart, feminine/pretty soul mate; she's athletic, her interests are artistic and cultural, and she's sweet at heart. Note/photo. 7433✉☎

Call This Gal—If you are seeking to connect with a slim, attractive, upbeat new love. You are an affectionate, sincere, empathic, healthy guy (58-69), eager to be in an honest relationship and to share life's adventures with a sparkling new partner, perchance to fall in love again. 7374 ✉☎

Slender, Sexy, Smart, Spontaneous—Adventurous, athletic, happy, honest, easygoing, world traveled and cultured. I have enjoyed 39 years of single life. Enjoy city life, beach and the country, boating, skiing and more. Professional and financially secure, accomplished and fulfilled, except for lasting love. Seek Prince Charming for love, laughs, best friend and family. Life will never be boring! 7371 ✉☎

Colorful Artist/Professor—48, 5'5", feminine, funny and fit, adventurous spirit, pretty with long auburn hair, seeks creative, compassionate, communicative, health-conscious, worldly man, 45-60, to share love of travel, nature, the arts and laughter. 7436 ✉☎

Classy, Curvaceous—Extremely attractive (truth!), extremely modest Jewish female, 5'6", long auburn hair, violet eyes, seeks kind, classy, sophisticated male, 5'10" plus, 40 plus, to enjoy the best of NY and each other. 7444✉☎

Pretty, Petite MD—Very attractive, young-looking 50, Bangladesh-born, kind, warm, loving, romantic, slim, fit, sincere, professionally and financially established, enjoy reading, poetry, nature, conversation, travel, movies. Seeking a man of equal caliber, up to age 56, nonsmoker, handsome, big heart, liberal mind, marriage minded, emotionally/physically healthy with great personality, for a romantic, happy life together. Note/photo/recent photo needed for reply, please. 7450 ✉

Art Lover—Pretty, slim, fit, long brown hair and almond-shaped eyes. Seeks cute, fit, great guy, 37-48, for gallery hopping, wine tastings, movies, walks and conversation. Religion open. Photo/note appreciated/phone. 7395✉☎

Attractive Blond Female—37, fit, educated, Scandinavian - likes movies, dining and traveling. Seeks a kind, family-oriented male. Photo, please. 7445 ✉

NYC Entrepreneur - Pretty, Creative—Redhead, 53, seeks lovable risk-taker for romantic adventures - movies, jazz, travel. Myapt1@aol.com 7403 ✉☎

Gay Upstate Male—40, boyishly handsome and fit, successful businessman looking for masculine counterpart for monogamous relationship. 7422 ✉

Single Jewish Female—45, looking for man, 42-52. Priority traits - me and you - intelligence, kindness, warmth, sense of humor - honesty, too. 7469 ✉

Bubbly, Attractive Brazilian—Jewish, successful, intelligent entrepreneur, young 51, 5'7", energetic, sensual lady, warm heart - seeks down-to-earth, stable, sincere counterpart to 57, 5'10" plus, with integrity/values. Note/photo. 7387 ✉☎

Slim Attractive Blonde—5'5", 105, 50s, looks 40s, highly intelligent, warm, sensitive, traditional values, desires handsome, fit, refined gentleman who is successful, kind, well traveled and enjoys the finer things in life. 7446 ✉ ☎

Unpretentious, Nonjudgmental—Affectionate, energetic male. Youthful 54. Nonsmoker/nondrinker. Lover of classical music, opera, theater, all the arts and attractive, bright women. Seeks loving, "grow old together" type romance. LI/NYC. Note/photo appreciated and reciprocated. Appldtec@aol.com 7404✉☎

Blue-Eyed Baby Boomer—Slim, pretty, creative, intellectual - seeks nonsmoking single man, 45-60, for companionship, affection and fun. 7439 ✉☎

Your Oscar Awaits—Seeking commitment-minded leading man for real-life version of Redford's "Up-Close and Personal" movie. This 45-year-old, petite and fit, officer-level female exec packs the energy and camera pizazz - but knows real star power is a partnership, not a solo act. Do accomplished women make your pulse race? Are you the highly successful and quietly confident star awaiting this casting call? Have you ever wanted to play opposite the blond in the red 'Vette who can manage travel and the boardroom as ably as managing her 11-year-old son? If the role sounds right for you, let's move to Act I. 7412 ✉☎

Recently Retired Woman—Young 58, former editor, zaftigly attractive, funny, smart, pet lover, volunteer, much more. Seeks sweet, easygoing, cerebral, solvent, well-spoken, nonsmoking man with time and interest and a twinkle in at least one eye. Write in some detail. 7399✉☎

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2 Fujiyama Mama Dinner 8:00 pm
3 Spanish Wine Tasting 7:00 pm
4 Fencing Class 7:00 pm
5 Group Board Games 8:00 pm
8 Gospel Brunch 11:00 am Softball Game 2:00 pm Film & Discussion 5:00 pm
9 Indoor Rock Climbing 7:00 pm
10 Philharmonic in the Park 6:30 pm Yoga Class 8:00 pm
11 Chinese Banquet 7:00 pm
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17 Drawing Class 7:00 pm
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19 Tarot Card Workshop 7:30 pm Poker Night 8:30 pm

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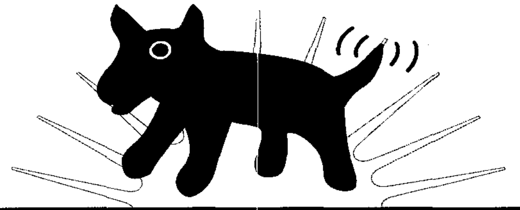

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Widow, San Francisco Area—Unusual, offbeat, soft, attractive. Formerly a university professor, now writer and serious hedonist. Seeks 63-plus Prince Charming to dance through the tulips together and share great romance. Seeking gentleman for all seasons with great sense of humor, in need of mental and physical touching. I am like the girl next-door who is now all grown up. 7425✉☎

Male CEO—53, divorced, visits NY often, seeks lady friend in FL. 7459 ✉

Handsome Entrepreneur—Youthful 42, dark hair, hazel eyes, very fit Christian man. Enjoys skiing, music, beaches, romantic dinners. Am caring, affectionate, compassionate and have a great sense of humor. Seeking a slim woman to 38, who is ready and has the capacity to truly connect. Please be a nonsmoker. Blonds a plus. 7384✉☎

Princess—Beauty, figure, youth, style, excitement, talents, brain, success, integrity, seeks knight. 7377 ✉☎

The Best Is Yet To Be—This accomplished, cultured, tall, not unattractive, successful and very financially independent professional is anxious, as Browning said, to share all of the good and exciting tomorrows with that mutually devoted and cherishing lady that I hope to meet. If world travel, the arts, carefree living, a good claret with dinner, and the joy and delight at the prospect of just two together excites you, as it does me, and if you're in those glorious years of 50 to 60, this once-again widower would love to hear all about you, with a photo. 7438 ✉

Beguiling Redhead Writer/Professor—Trim and fit (ex-dancer), culturally involved, outdoorsy - seeks substantial man with good values, 55-68, eager to connect with a kindred spirit. 7396✉☎

Pretty, Spirited, Spiritual—Warm, loving, accomplished Jewish professional, very youthful 54, 5'6", fit, active, happy, filled with joie de vivre. Seeks Jewish soulmate to share love of family, friends, travel and whatever together. 7430 ✉☎

Handsome, Lonely—Nonreligious Jewish man, 61, 5'10", 160 lbs, zip 10021. Seeks slim female (buddy only), 50 plus, for Sunday strolls in Central Park and evening strolls around the neighborhood (nothing more right now)... But, hey, you never know. Send very detailed (typed) letters only. Photo a must. 7427✉

Successful Doctor/Entrepreneur—Divorced white male, 40ish, well-built, tolerant, seeks kind, intelligent beauty, nonsmoking, to share the good life, domesticity, adventure and my Hampton summer waterfront home. Please, photo/note/phone. 7462 ✉

Beautiful Blond Professional—63, 5'4", 125. Warm, kind, refined, classy and amusing. Seeks attractive, well-bred, secure man for country drives, hiking, picnics, films and night life. 7421 ✉☎

Sweet, Tall, Blond—Berkeley-educated, sexy, unconventional, vulnerable, pretty girl-woman, 40s, with good heart, quick wit, seeks loving, protective man, under 50, for the rest of time. I like cooking, creating a wonderful home life. 7419 ✉☎

Ready For Romance—Bright, attractive, adventurous, fun-loving, well-traveled Jewish female seeks kind, educated, active man, 55-67, to fill my life with friendship and love. 7407 ✉☎

Unique Millionaire—Self-made, street-smart entrepreneur - intelligent, ambitious, 59 going on 39, 6'3", 230, seeks sexy soul mate - real woman with a great figure, 30-45. Photo. 7435 ✉☎

Smart, Beautiful Scandinavian—Divorced blond. Financially independent, reformed workaholic with enough leisure time to really enjoy life. Warm, caring, well-balanced and a lot of fun. Information seeker, conversant in financial management, health care, education, movies, science, more. Believes life is so much easier with a good laugh. Excellent navigator, whether exploring Glacier National Park, Tuscany or NYC. Terrific cook, gardener. Affectionate team player. Seeks bright, physically active, 47-67 man who enjoys good conversation and is ready to appreciate a wonderful, loving woman. sue@activewoman.com 7413✉☎

Catholic Female, 38—With great looks, is well-read, conversant on many subjects and lives a highly enviable lifestyle. Big on sports, food, music, Italy, historical novels and laughter. Seeks fit, politically conservative male, 35-48, who is secure, responsible, down-to-earth, with fine character and wholesome disposition. Nonsmoker. Photo/note. 7468 ✉

Dynamic Platinum Blond—Pretty, slim, witty, sexy... In search of one normal, terrific guy - 50s/60s. Are you out there? Make me a believer. No photo/no response. 7418 ✉☎

Pretty Black Woman Seeks Mensch—Upbeat, upscale professional seeks sweet, cuddly, educated male companion, 35-50. elpea99@aol.com 7370 ✉☎

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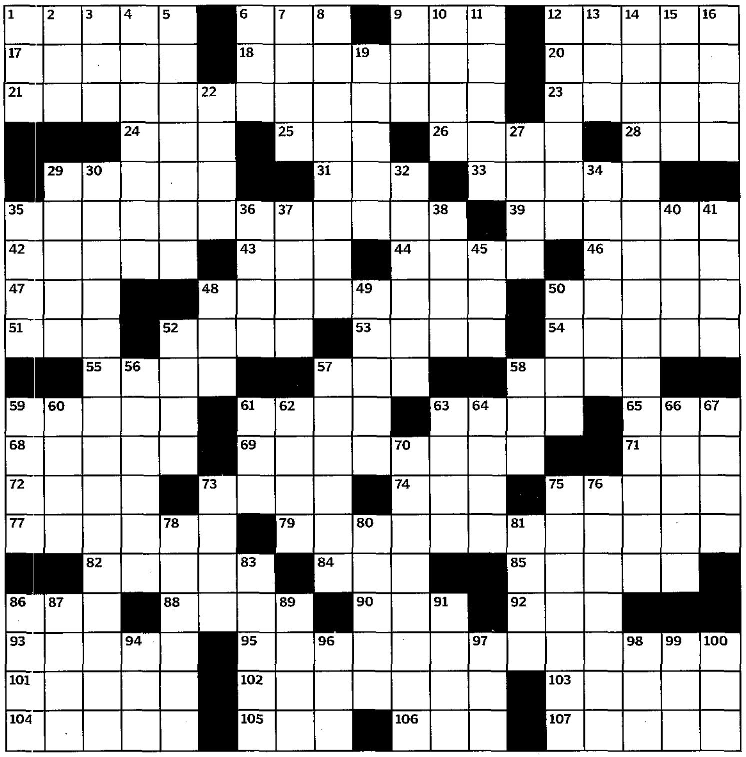

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23 Audience's view
24 Is able to
25 Depot abbr.
26 Volcano runoff
28 Chinese skillet
29 One of —— (singleton)
31 Double this before hooray
33 Formation at the mouth of a river
35 "Stop fiddling around," said ——
39 Grow molars
42 Championship
43 Kanga's baby
44 Flivver
46 "Pygmalion" playwright
47 Writer LeShan
48 "I'm tired of philandering," said ——
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73 Border on
74 Tax-deferred acct.
75 Rapiers' relatives
77 Extraterrestrials
79 "I had faith in all my films," said ——
82 "Consequences" alternative
84 Part: abbr.
85 Oscar-winner as Sophie
86 Tennis do-over
88 Capricorn
90 Harper Valley gp.
92 Instrument-player suffix
93 Lumberjack activity
95 "I didn't overact in 'Basic Instinct,' " said ——
101 Free-for-all
102 Capital of Cyprus
103 Do a second tinting
104 Up to now
105 This is dynamite
106 Foxy
107 Hurons' kin

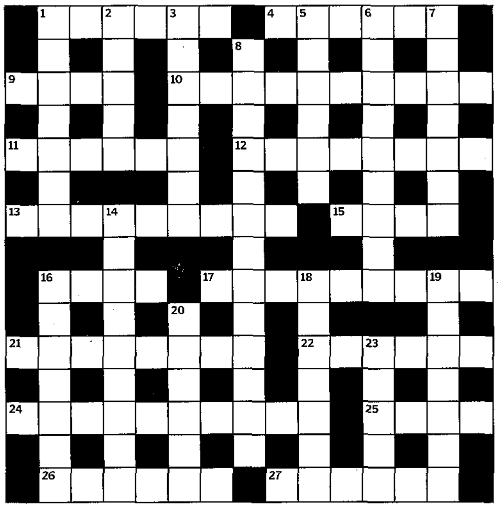
DOWN

1 Stimpy's TV pal
2 Nickname for Yale
3 Sound from a souse
4 Not gregarious
5 Equilibrium
6 Letters on an orthodontist's shingle
7 Rainbow shapes
8 London airport
9 Brest friend
10 Rival of Gateway
11 Wood nymph
12 Marked down
13 Foldaway bed
14 "I am a fearless Indian," said ——
15 Therefore
16 Emit a high odor
19 Once more
22 Companion of ifs and buts
27 White House negation
29 In reserve
30 "I tell jokes when I skate," said ——
32 Arrivals at 8-Down
34 Exam-taker
35 Agenda unit
36 Harness-racing gait
37 Ages and ages
38 Santa time
40 Sentry's order
41 Rams' mates
45 Hall-of-Famer Cobb, and others
48 Clamor
49 Out of alignment
50 Yemen's gulf
52 ZIP Code information
56 Place for Jack Horner
57 Ford and Friedan
58 Dave's late-show competitor
59 First name in spydom
60 G.I. no-show
61 Emergency police message, for short
62 "Oz" author
63 Fictional Breckinridge
64 Carrier to Israel
66 Run of weather
67 Suburb of Paris
70 Kids' version of quoits
73 Concerning
75 Ugly sight
76 Co-owner
78 Gold-miner's find
80 Printed copy, briefly
81 Fail to include
83 "He —— a Thing Except Me," 1936 song
86 Holy Tibetan
87 Former spouses
89 Like most models
91 Indigo dye
94 Word preceding a maiden name
96 Play a role
97 Recite
98 Exile Amin
99 Alkaline substance
100 Thumbs up

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Rufus

ACROSS

1 Attempt to finish inside with it. (6)
4 House gets these speeches from one of the parties. (6)
9 Time to return to a region. (4)
10 End of soldiering in Europe for military force. (10)
11 French girl in some trouble. (6)
12 Shipping company that was floated using the double-entry system. (5,3)
13 Not a properly constituted company? (9)
15 Not stiff, but walk stiffly. (4)
16 A way through on foot. (4)
17 One taking part in the arms race? (9)
21 A record? Yes, of course. (5,3)
22 Cracked jokes although bound not to speak. (6)
24 It's exactly according to form. (7,3)
25 Cools ardent admirers. (4)
26 Enters the lists? (6)
27 A gunsmith will add it to his stock. (6)



DOWN

1 Black mark for copper. (7)
2 Uplifting holy books are an inspiration to poets. (5)
3 Title of the French game. (7)
5 April's turned out to be spring-like. (6)
6 So dieting affected one's assimilation of food. (9)
7 Hot spot turns out to upset father. (7)
8 For the present it shall be nameless. (9,4)
14 Save excerpt of novel. (6,3)
16 The late converted into the quick? (7)
18 For which a damp course is essential. (7)
19 Constant troubles alter one, nonetheless. (7)
20 It's used as anti-freeze in exceedingly cold weather. (6)
23 Prefer to attack. (2,3)

Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 83.

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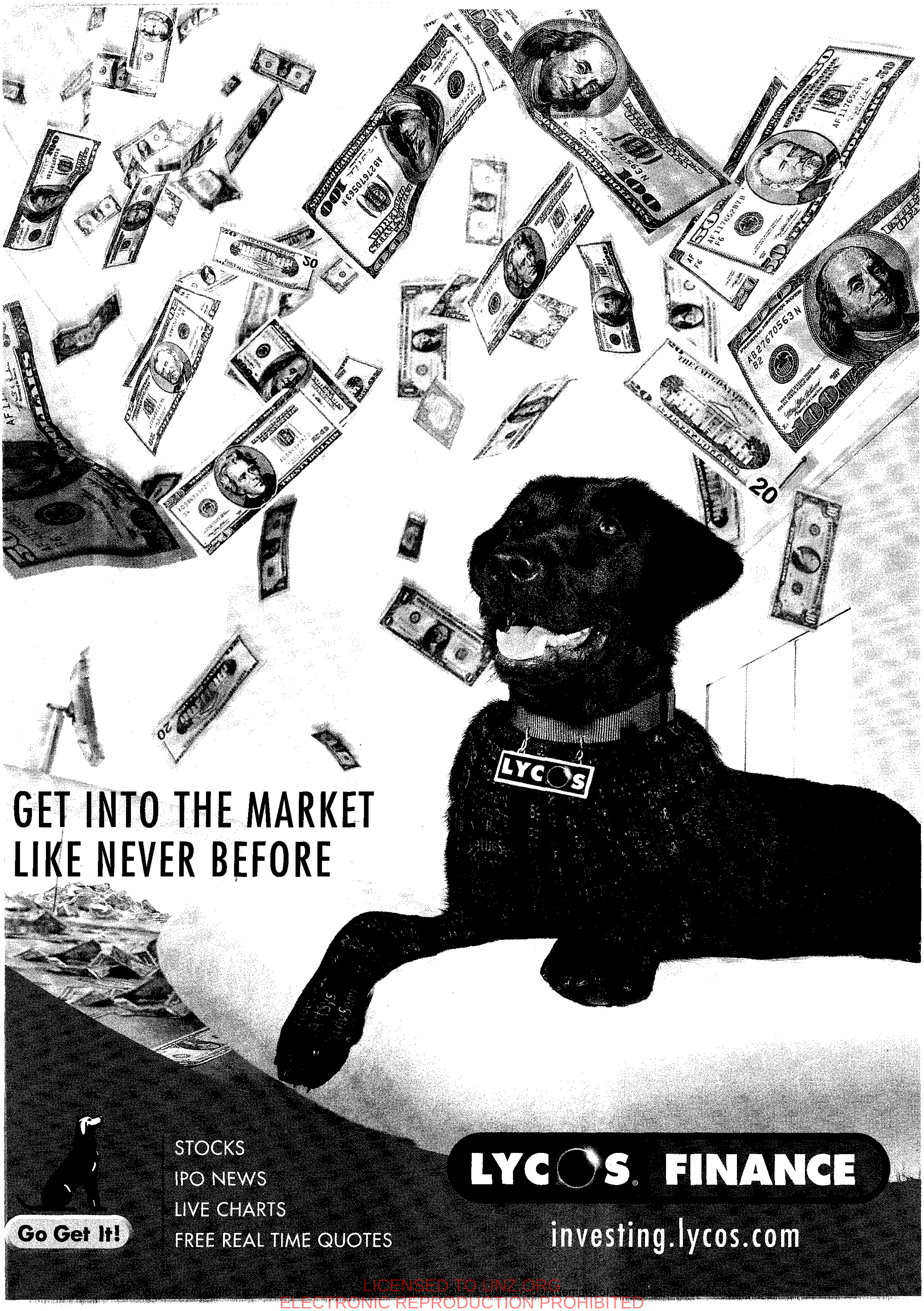
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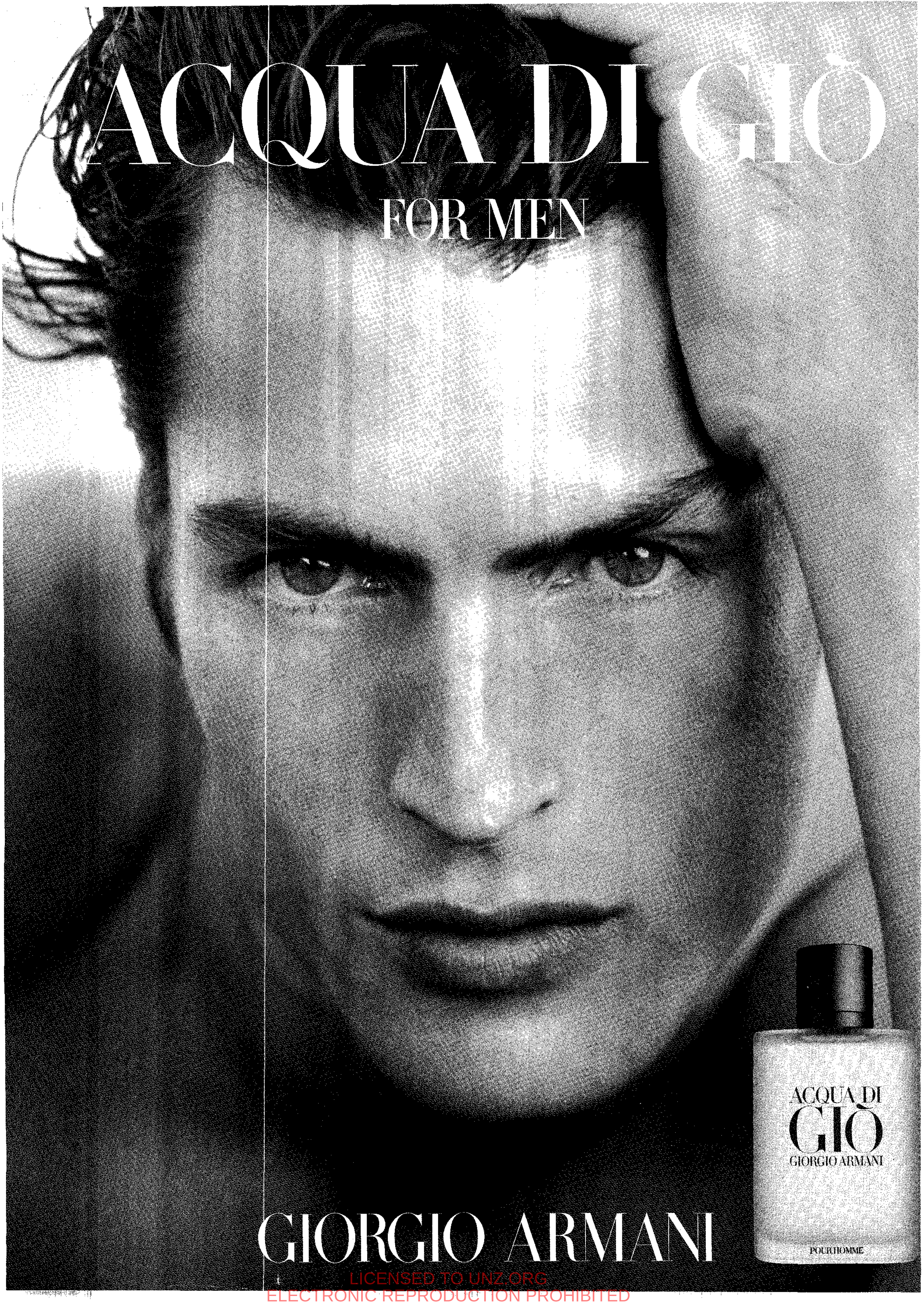
ACQUA DI GIÒ
FOR MEN
GIORGIO ARMANI
ACQUA DI
GIÒ
GIORGIO ARMANI
POUR HOMME